

DEER INDUSTRY NEWS

Issue 18 • February 2006 • Official magazine of Deer Industry New Zealand and the NZDFA



Deer industry survey results

Also in this issue:

- Conference preview
- Animal ID and traceability submissions
- Cervena programme reinvigorated
- Opportunities in China
- Drenching survey
- Selection for early calving
- Sire sale report



**DEER INDUSTRY
NEW ZEALAND**

NZDFA
New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association



Annual survey to build clearer picture

Welcome to the 18th edition of Deer Industry News and the first for 2006.

There is some excellent material in this issue – from promotional activity for Cervena® in the United States to assessing the value of earlier calving hinds. An anticipated highlight is the results of the Deer Industry Annual Survey. We have summarised the results into an ‘at a glance’ section for those who wish to know the key outcomes. We have also included a significant amount of further information and interpretation so that producers who wish to delve further into the numbers and assumptions can do so.

Deer Industry Annual Survey

I sincerely thank the 3,205 people who responded to the survey either by mail or by answering questions by phone. DINZ would like the survey to be conducted annually so that a picture builds up over time. Your suggestions are welcome.

The survey should be put into the context of current production levels. To the year ended October 2005, the industry slaughtered approximately 763,000 deer compared to 675,000 in the year ended October 2004. This is an increase of 13% (and 38% over YE October 2003). Importantly, venison marketers have consistently indicated that venison stocks are not building (any more than is usual). This is consistent with comments DINZ receives from importers.

The provisional results from the Statistics New Zealand annual survey are also included. One figure to note is the significant decrease in the number of hinds mated (and still on farm as at 30 June 2005) of 53,500.

Velvet supply

The NZDFA Branch Chairmen and Executive Committee, along with DINZ, initiated and supported a move coordinated by PGG Wrightson to delay the sale of some lower grades of velvet to 1 February 2006. PGG Wrightson made a call to begin sales of these lower grades in the last week of January

as pool volumes got smaller. The overall effect, arguably, seems to have been a small increase in value to those grades over other grades. However, the main point I would take from the exercise was that it was an example that velvet producers can act collectively for the common good of all producers. It was an achievable, simple measure. **I believe that velvet producers need to consider more ways to act collectively. If you are a velvet producer and you agree (or disagree), please drop me an email (mark.oconnor@deernz.org) or call me on 04 471 6113.**



Deer industry conference

The industry conference will be a shorter, concise affair in Christchurch on 24 May (with an industry dinner the evening before). If you haven't been before, please seriously consider attending. It's an opportunity to directly question and provide comment to your DINZ Board and Executive (or just listen to others' questions). The remits which are debated and voted on at the NZDFA AGM are relevant and important to consider.

Industry promotion

I am particularly pleased that the Cervena programme is being reinvigorated. New materials, PR strategies, chef ambassadors, culinary event sponsorship and individual licensees' sales and marketing programmes are in place. The target that licensees have set themselves is a stretch target – a doubling of exports of Cervena to 1,200 tonnes without a decrease in price by September 2007. This would take Cervena volumes to levels not achieved before despite relatively large levy-payer investment in the past.

The German promotional campaign is being re-designed this year to promote New Zealand venison more closely at the retail point of sale (supermarkets etc) with greater flexibility to allow tailoring of promotions to individual company timing and branding requirements.

Finally, I acknowledge the contribution made by colleague and friend, Rob Gregory, following his recent departure from DINZ. Rob's energy and passion for the deer industry he served was great, and I know he enjoyed the interaction he had with producers, vets and the industry at large.

I hope you find this edition of Deer Industry News interesting and thought provoking. 

Mark O'Connor
CEO, Deer Industry New Zealand

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Circulation enquiries: Deer Industry New Zealand,
PO Box 10-702, Wellington, Ph 04 471 6114,
Fax 04 472 5549, Email info@deernz.org

Editorial and advertising enquiries: Words & Pictures,
PO Box 27-221, Wellington, Ph 04 384 4688,
Fax 04 384 4667, Email din@wordpict.co.nz

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Deer Industry Annual Survey

Results and discussion

Processing returns from last year's Deer Industry Annual Survey is complete. The figures confirm much of what has been evident anecdotally, but provides a sound statistical basis for industry planning and a clearer picture of industry trends. This article outlines the New Zealand deer industry as it stood at 30 June 2005. It is mainly based on results of the DIAS and Statistics New Zealand's provisional results from their Agricultural Production Survey¹ (APS) released on 16 December 2005 (see Point 6).

AT A GLANCE...

- Breeding hind population of 842,000 as at 30 June 2005.
- Weaner base of 670,000 as at 30 June 2005
- Expected weaner base of 630-665,000 as at 30 March 2006.
- Velvet herd (MA stags) of 116,000 as at 30 June 2005.
- Producers slaughter intentions were 717,000 deer to YE 30 June 2006; and
- Producers intended to slaughter 65,000 mixed aged stags to year ended June 2006 which indicated some intention to decrease velvet production.

1. Sample

The DIAS was mailed, then re-mailed to non-responders, then further non-responders were telephoned several times. The DIAS received 3,205 responses, of whom 2,830 were farming deer as at 30 June 2005.

2. Herd size and composition

DIAS returns indicated the following herd size and composition as at 30 June 2005. The results have been extrapolated to Statistics New Zealand's figures to account for non-responders.

	Industry Survey ²	Extrapolation to Statistics NZ figures
Weaner hinds	318,166	340,587
R2 hinds	160,137	171,422
MA hinds	626,052	670,170
TOTAL HINDS	1,134,116	1,182,179
Weaner stags	313,360	330,246
R2 stags	78,658	82,897
MA stags	110,239	116,179
TOTAL STAGS	507,801	529,321
TOTAL DEER	1,649,172	1,711,500
Hinds calving (at 84% of R2 and MA hinds based on responses) ³	658,612	705,024

Table 1: Total deer numbers and hinds calving.

- The Annual Industry Survey as at 30 June 2005 indicated a breeding herd (R2 and MA hinds) of 842,000.
- The DIAS collected 96% of the APS Total Deer figure (noting the 8% margin of error in the APS figures).
- The Statistics New Zealand figures of fawns surviving to weaning as a percentage of hinds mated (which includes, non conception, pre and post natal losses) is 75%.
- Multiplying the breeding population available in the 2004 survey (848,000) by 75% indicates total expected weaners in the 2004 survey of 636,000 in contrast to the DIAS actual return extrapolated to 671,000.
- This discrepancy indicates that the Statistics NZ return likely over-emphasises the net weaning percentage. Other productivity data (McFarlane 2005) suggests that an overall figure of 79% is more relevant. That would predict a weaner base at 30 June 2005 of 669,900 which is very close to the 671,000 recorded in returns.
- The 2005 potential breeding hind pool figure of approximately 842,000 has been predicted to have 84% available for calving, (or 705,000), 2% more than that predicted in 2004.
- If that figure reflects the 10% loss typically recorded in the Deer Master project and various other recording systems, then 634,000 weaners are expected in March 2006.
 - Using Statistics New Zealand figures at 75%, overall

weaning or 75% achievement of reproductive potential, 631,000 weaners are expected to be weaned in March 2006; and

- At 79% achievement, 665,180 weaners would be expected.
- Deer Industry New Zealand believes that the lower figure is more likely given the anecdotally reported numbers of pregnant hinds slaughtered since 30 June 2005 and there appears to be little overall productivity improvement in the critical calf losses from birth to weaning statistic.

3. Herd size

No. of animals on farm	Number of farms	% of farms of those responding	% of deer represented on these farms
0-50	331	12%	0.5%
51-150	602	21%	4%
151-250	411	15%	5%
251-500	573	20%	13%
501-1,000	526	19%	22%
1,001-2,000	278	10%	23%
2,001-3,000	58	2%	8%
3,001-4,000	18	1%	4%
4,001-5,000	6	0.2%	1.6%
5,001-10,000	15	1%	6%
>10,000	5	0.2%	13%

Table 2: Herd size distribution among survey respondents.

Distribution of herd size is shown graphically in Figures 1 and 2:

- The average size of deer farms was 583 deer.
- 33% of farms which returned surveys have less than 150 deer. These farms account for 4% of the herd in survey returns.
- 68% of farms which returned surveys have less than 500 deer. These farms account for 22% of the herd in survey returns.
- 87% of farms which returned surveys have less than 1,000 deer. These farms account for 44% of the herd in survey returns.
- The 26 largest farms account for 21% of the national herd.
- The 4% of largest farms with 2,000 or more deer account for 33% of the herd in survey returns.

Of the total land area of farms with deer on them, 21% of the farm area is deer fenced. This is an indication of the prevalence of mixed farming operations and therefore the ability of most farms to move in and out of deer depending on their circumstances.

4. Intentions

4.a Herd growth or reduction

Respondents provided an indication as to intended changes hind and stag numbers in their herd. This was expressed either as a

change in deer numbers or % changes. Responses were converted to animal numbers and these results are shown below.

INTENTIONS	Stags		Hinds		Stags and Hinds
	Number of respondees	Number of deer	Number of respondees	Number of deer	
Intentions to increase	290	14,101	434	33,618	
Intentions to decrease	923	61,161	983	111,531	
Net change indicated (decrease)		(47,060)		(77,912)	(124,973)
Extrapolated		(48,839)		(80,857)	(129,696)

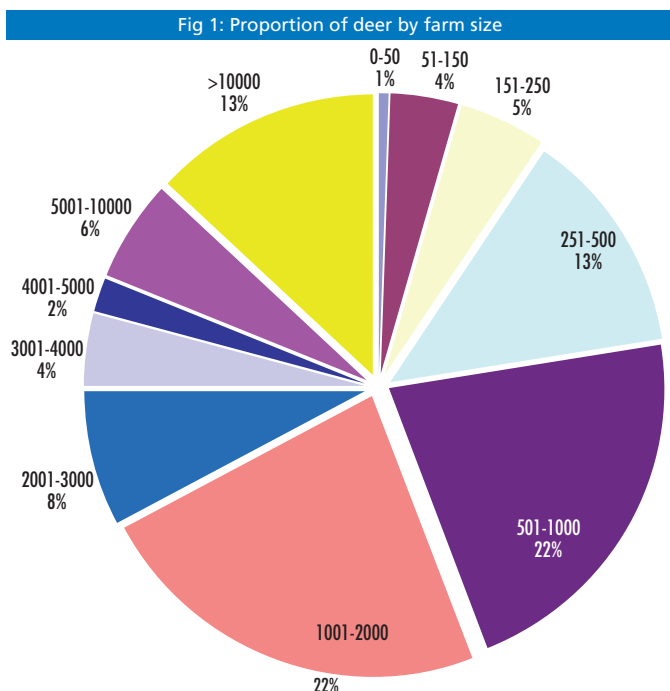
Table 3: Intentions to increase or decrease herd size.

- This is a threefold increase in farmer intentions to decrease exposure to deer over the survey in 2004 (41,000).
- There were 259 survey responses which indicated an intent to exit the deer industry entirely. In addition, 40 intended to exit hinds only and 83 intended to exit stags only. The proportion of those intending to exit entirely comprises 9% of all respondees.
- The average herd size of those intending to exit entirely is 220 in contrast to the average herd size of those intending to increase their holdings at 550.

4.b Producers' intentions to slaughter

	Survey	Extrapolated
Hinds for slaughter <2 yo	177,610	184,323
Hinds for slaughter >2 yo	135,176	140,285
Stags for slaughter < 2 yo	224,790	233,286
Stags for slaughter > 2 yo	62,788	65,161
	690,866	716,976

Table 4: Producers' slaughter intentions between June 2005 and June 2006. NB: care should be taken in using the figures for hind and stag figures by age. Some 90,000 animals intended for slaughter were not broken down by age. Therefore, the individual classes will be understated.

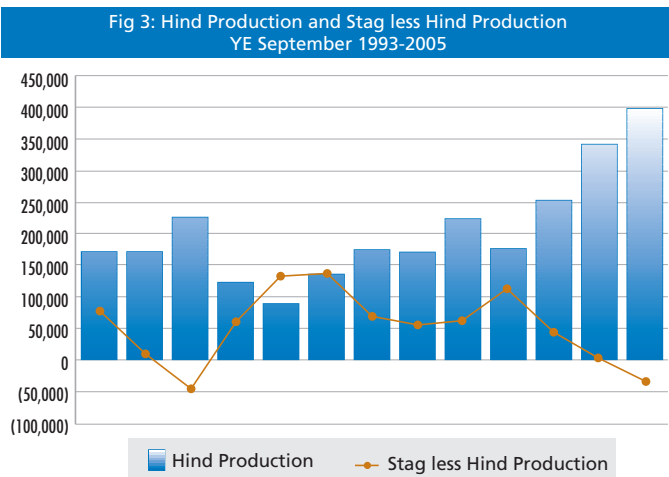
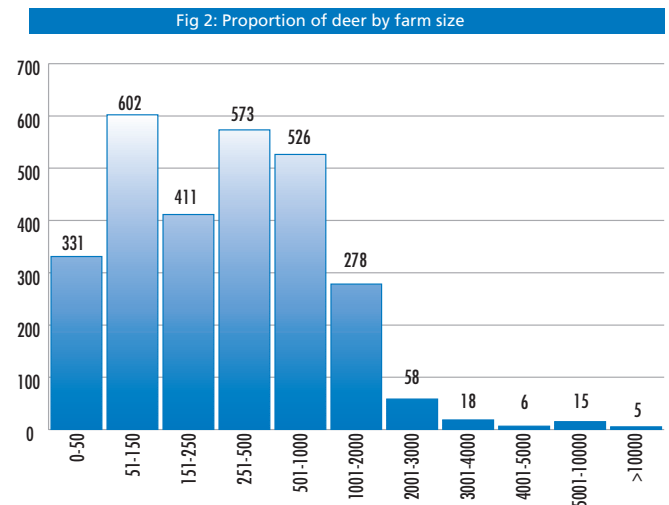


Extrapolated intended total production of 717,000 deer indicates an intention to continue production at high levels. This has been borne out with continued high production. Production to the year ended September 2005 was 762,000 animals.

4.c Velvet stags

The extrapolated number of mixed age stags is 116,000. Assuming that the life of a mature velvet stag is a high 9 years^d (once selected as a 2 year old), the number of MA stags that drop out of the herd each year is around 13,000. The returns show an extrapolated intended kill of 65,000, indicating an intended decrease in the size of the velveting herd of about 50,000 stags. That indicates a potential reduction of 130 tonnes of velvet. To some extent that may be compensated by the seemingly high number of 2 yo stags farmers have indicated they will retain. That figure could be 40,000-50,000. Accuracy is partially compromised as a large number of returns did not break their intentions for slaughter down by age group or class. There are some 90,000 animals intended for kill unallocated by class and age.

It is reasonable to expect that owing to the reported difficulty in securing space for aged stags, younger animals will have been slaughtered in preference and much of that velvet (130 tonne reduction anticipated) will be removed and in the system for 2005/06). Deer Industry New Zealand anticipates some reduction and is aware that significant numbers of young and old stags have also been grown out for evaluation. This will lower total volume slightly as well.



5. Production

Aside from the DIAS, venison production statistics over time give an indication of changes within the national herd. If one assumes that the velvet herd remains relatively constant over time⁵, it is logical that the difference between hind and stag production is an *approximate* indicator of changes to capital stock.

Table 5 below shows production for the year ended September 1993 to 2005. This is shown graphically in Figure 3.

	TOTAL	STAGS	HINDS	S-H
1993	420,374	248,878	171,088	77,790
1994	351,699	180,803	170,665	10,138
1995	408,678	181,212	227,133	(45,921)
1996	309,066	184,295	123,995	60,300
1997	311,749	222,324	89,425	132,899
1998	407,405	271,690	135,715	135,975
1999	420,337	245,676	174,661	71,015
2000	404,471	230,898	173,573	57,325
2001	508,995	286,320	222,675	63,645
2002	464,620	288,576	176,044	112,532
2003	550,263	297,056	253,207	43,849
2004	683,234	343,312	339,922	3,390
2005	762,427	364,484	397,943	(33,459)

Table 5: Production for YE Sept 1993-2005

The last significant retention of hinds was in 2002 when 113,000 less hinds were slaughtered than stags. Since then, this has decreased to (33,000) despite a large increase in stag kill.

Velvet herd

The extrapolated velvet herd is estimated at 116,000 MA stags. Assuming an average weight of 2.6 kg per stag, this indicates SA, A, B, C of 302 tonnes. Records from pools extrapolated to the national herd estimate SA, A, B, C of 282 tonnes. The difference is equivalent to 20 tonnes of frozen velvet or 7,700 stags assuming 2.6 kg per stag.

Thanks!

Deer Industry New Zealand sincerely thanks producers for completing the survey. There have been many calls from producers for more information on changes in the national herd and intentions. We hope that you find this useful and that you examine the numbers so that you form your own view on industry prospects. We welcome your comments and any discussion. Contact Mark O'Connor, Deer Industry New Zealand, PO Box 10-702, Wellington or mark.oconnor@deernz.org.

And the winners are...

The Branch with the largest proportion of producers who returned the mailed survey was Taranaki. They have been sent a cheque for \$1,000 towards Branch activities. The producer who won the draw of producers who sent in the survey was Max Winders of Ngongotaha. He has also been sent a cheque for \$1,000. Congratulations.

Further information

- Last year's Annual Industry Survey Results: www.deernz.org/resources
- Statistics New Zealand's Agricultural Production Survey: <http://www.stats.govt.nz/agriculture>, then click on Agricultural Production Survey
- 2005 Deer Monitoring Report: <http://www.maf.govt.nz/statistics/primaryindustries/farm-monitoring/deer.htm>

6. Statistics New Zealand's Agricultural Production Survey

For completeness, Statistics New Zealand's provisional results from its APS are reprinted below.

Year	Deer Numbers ⁽¹⁾⁽²⁾⁽³⁾⁽⁴⁾		
	Year to 30 June	At 30 June	Year to 30 June
	Female deer mated ⁽⁵⁾	Total deer	Fawns born on the farm ⁽⁶⁾
1993			
1994	543,100	1,231,100	..
1995	508,600	1,178,700	..
1996	541,700	1,192,100	..
1997	..	..	..
1998	..	..	..
1999	834,100	1,676,800	..
2000	..	..	..
2001	..	..	..
2002	891,300	1,647,900	654,700
2003	885,600	1,689,400	670,400
2004	868,900	1,759,100	700,400
2005	815,400	P 1,711,500	P 648,100

(1) There was no agriculture production survey conducted in 1997, 1998 and 2001. In 2000 the survey related only to horticulture. In 1994 and 2002, an agricultural census was conducted.

(2) The population for the 2002 Agricultural Production Census and subsequent surveys differs from that of previous agricultural censuses and surveys. Figures from 2002 onwards may not be directly comparable with previous years.

(3) Estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100.

(4) Changes were made to the question design in the 2004 and 2005 Agriculture Production Surveys. Figures for 2004 and 2005 may not be directly comparable with those from previous years.


(5) Number of female deer mated and still on the farm at 30 June.

(6) In 2005, data relates to fawns born on the farm that were alive at four months. In 2003 and 2004, data relates to fawns weaned on the farm. In 2002, data relates to fawns born on the farm.

Symbols: P = provisional .. = not applicable

Table 6: Statistics New Zealand deer herd figures from Agricultural Production Survey.

(Article footnotes)

- ¹ The Agricultural Production Survey included 40% of deer farms in Statistics New Zealand's survey population. The provisional survey information provided on 16 December 2005 has a margin of error of 7-8% at a confidence level of 95%.
- ² The total hind and stag numbers in the DIAS do not equal the sum of the different classes within each gender because in some cases respondents provided total stag and hind numbers only. Further, as some respondents only provided total deer numbers, the total stag and hind numbers do not equal the total deer numbers provided. The extrapolated figures use the relative % in each sex and class from the DIAS to estimate total herd composition.
- ³ Estimations based on past returns of calves born and weaned from hinds calving is 95% (i.e. 5% loss from birth to weaning).
- ⁴ Note that the life of a stag is open to debate and a factor for culling for performance once older than 3 yo has not been included. As such, the average life of a stag could be closer to 5 years which would mean herd replacements would total 23,000 rather than 13,000.
- ⁵ Clearly this is a large assumption. For example, at present velvet production appears to be decreasing, and there was a significant decrease in the late 1990s following the Asian Economic Crisis. However, the purpose is to provide a 'rough guide'. 

Carr: Crucial time for industry

Graham Carr is one of the world's biggest private deer producers, running over 12,000 deer here and in the UK in his Graham Carr International Deer Group. He was appointed by the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association to the Deer Industry New Zealand Board last June through the Selection and Appointments Panel.

Graham Carr was born in Doncaster, England in 1943. Arriving in New Zealand in the early 1980s, Graham came with strong sales and marketing skills, fresh from a directorship of the British publicly-listed John Carr Group, a successful family timber processing company employing around 2,000 staff.

He was drawn here, he says, by the passion he found in the New Zealand deer industry which was driven by passionate people, "passionate about their new developing deer farming industry and passionate about the product".

He subsequently acquired Peel Forest Estate in South Canterbury in 1987 to run as a Red deer stud and international marketing arm for the Group. His research led him to the view that venison was the designer red meat, ideal for the changing modern world and that it had huge potential. "Now, 20 years later, my belief has not wavered one iota. If anything it has grown stronger."

He is disappointed that its potential has not been realised – yet – but says the industry needs strong leadership and professionalism to continue to build on the good work of DINZ to bring maturity, stability and viability into the industry.

During his speech to the DFA conference last year, Graham Carr outlined his views on the current state of the industry and how to address the issues. He believes that venison needs to be repositioned in the marketplace as a premium product and that consumers need to be educated about its healthy, modern, safe attributes and shown that it is easy to prepare. Marketers and in-market partners need to achieve and maintain the objectives of the Board through co-operation, solid working relationships and trust, through a combined team effort, he said.

"Producers must consciously buy into the 'Three Partners, One Vision' strategy and take responsibility for helping to make it successful," he asserted. "Producers need to be given the data to make responsible decisions on production levels that are [for] industry good as well as for their own good. We must understand the over-, and possibly, under-supply issues, their ramifications and act responsibly."


He is firmly behind the development of improved deer farming technology and sire referencing schemes to substantially lift productivity and, in doing so, improve viability.

For the velvet sector, he believes new volume markets need to be found to enable the industry to control the volume into New Zealand's higher-priced traditional Korean market. He has identified the multi-billion dollar pet-food industry as that important volume market.

"There is no doubt that the success of the industry now depends on the stability of prices and supply at acceptable levels. Without these we will not have a bankable industry.

"I believe we are entering a very challenging and, potentially, a very rewarding time for the industry. However, it is also a crucial time where we have, possibly, this last opportunity to put and keep the industry firmly on the road to a strong and sustainable recovery and to establish our credibility in the marketplace.

"I am enjoying the challenges of being a DINZ Board member. The deer industry has to be proactive for our own viability and success and not just allow the market forces of supply and demand to be the only factors influencing our fortunes."

In addition to his other activities, Graham is also director/owner of Graham Carr (NZ) Ltd, a deer (stud and commercial) company that also has interests in sheep, cattle, dairying, forestry and investment. He still finds time for a range of outdoor activities, including tennis, fishing, boating and gun sports. Conservation is another interest, and he won the 2003 Velpool Environmental Merit Award for excellence in environmental management for animal welfare. 



**20 years later,
my belief has not
wavered one iota**

New Year Honour for Clive

Clive Jermy was made an Officer of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his services to the deer industry in the 2006 New Year's Honours.

Clive says he was honoured and thrilled at the news of the award, which he says was quite unexpected. "My first thoughts were that there are a lot of unsung people in our industry, and there have been very few accolades for their contributions over the years.

"At a time when the industry has been going through turmoil it is pleasing to see deer farming to be recognised in this way."

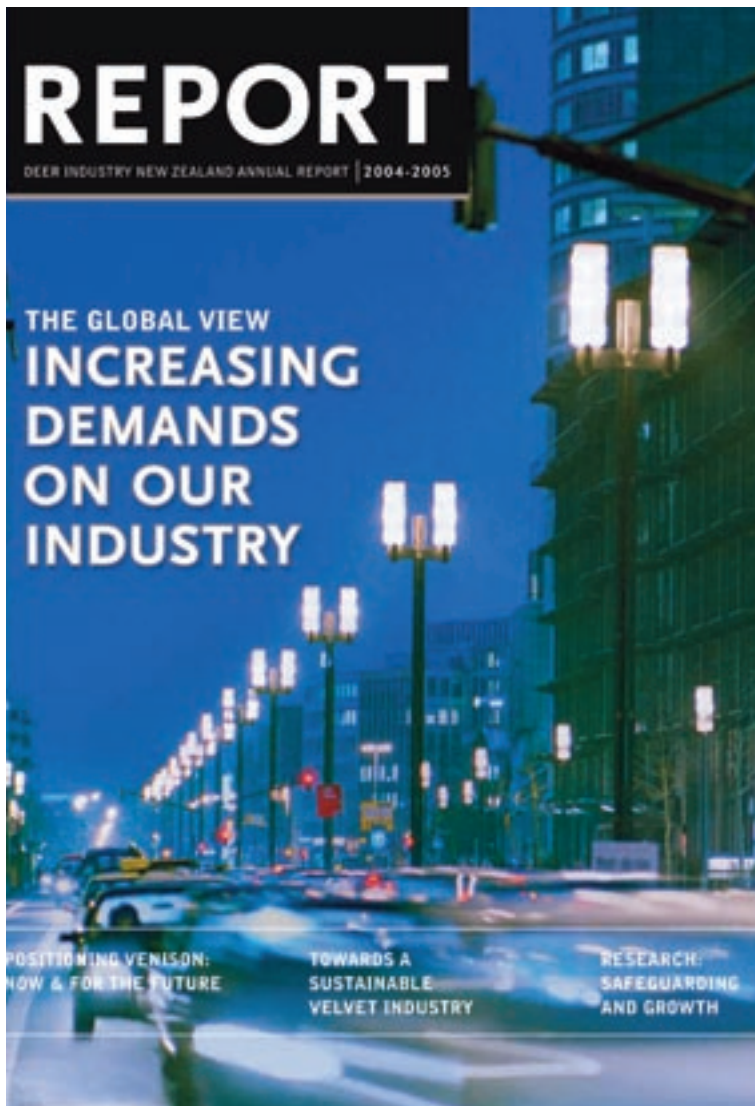
Clive is in good company. Among those also receiving this honour were Emeritus Professor Neil Bruère (veterinary science), well-known Wellington businessman Alan Martin, cartoonist Tom Scott and rugby league legend, Stacey Jones.

The five-level New Zealand Order of Merit was established in 1996.

Annual Report:

Increasing demands for deer industry

John Scurr, Chairman of Deer Industry New Zealand, remains resolutely confident in the future of venison, velvet and co-products and – despite the pressures and challenges facing the industry – firmly believes its long-term strategies and goals must not be compromised, he says in the newly released DINZ annual report for 2004-2005.




Progress in year one of each of the five year strategies for venison and velvet is highlighted in the report, along with successful promotional activity in new markets for venison and progress for market access for New Zealand velvet into South Korea and Taiwan. Investment in research and development continues to position the products well for the future.

Taking the global view, the annual report discusses the reasons for the very trying conditions that faced the New Zealand deer industry last year. That included a 70 percent increase in venison production in just three years, coupled with other factors such as a strong New Zealand dollar and higher costs of doing business, resulting in unsustainably low returns for the industry.

In his covering letter, however, John Scurr points out that for venison, the combination of a drop in the number of hinds mated according to Statistics New Zealand and an active European game season are positives. "This should lead to the situation where production falls to a point where supply is too low, leading to an increase in price. The question is timing."

Over-supply in the velvet sector appears to be trending down, with lower pool volumes.

Out of an income of \$7.38 million (excluding AHB levies), 45 percent was spent on venison and velvet promotional activity, 19 percent on research and just over five percent on producer management and quality assurance. 

Copies of the 2004-2005 Deer Industry New Zealand annual report were posted out to deer farmers at the end of January. If you did not receive one, or would like another copy, contact info@deernz.org or ring 04-473 4500.

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Welcome: Diary this event now!

Industry conference, Christchurch 2006

The NZDFA and Deer Industry New Zealand warmly invite you to attend in the 2006 New Zealand Deer Industry Conference meetings (FGM and AGM) which will be held in Christchurch on 24 May 2006.

In a departure this year, and somewhat reflecting the tough times of the past two years, the FGM (Deer Industry New Zealand) and AGM of the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association will be held at Christchurch's Commodore Copthorne hotel as a single day event.

The Board and Branch chairmen have endorsed the one-day event although this will be preceded by the Branch Chairmen's meeting on Tuesday 23 May. Travelling and local deer farmers are invited to register and attend the industry's Annual Awards dinner on the Tuesday evening.

This will feature the traditional Deer Industry Award, Matuschka Award and the 2006 Environmental Award. We are hopeful that Minister of Agriculture Jim Anderton will be able to attend, with some keynote speaker theme rather than the usual entertainments.

The industry has also committed to developing at least two satellite meetings following the formal requirements of the AGM/FGM – one targeted for the deep south and one central or upper North Island. These will combine the condensed FGM presentations and some selected technical papers from the DEEResearch portfolio and productivity strategy. Industry issues will be on the debating and discussion floor.

In part, this was also programmed to allow New Zealand farmers to capitalise on that oft-quoted phrase "It's cheaper to go to Australia" and attend the World Deer Farming Congress IV in Melbourne on the 20th-22nd of April (see page 25 for details).




The Conference format will return in 2007. Early discussions are being developed with the Waikato Branch as potentially the next host, although some other options, potentially involving an all meat and domestic livestock approach combined symposium with sector breakout sessions are also in the wind.

Pre-registration forms for the Awards Dinner and later the satellite meetings and a request for indication of attendance at the FGM/AGM for catering will be sent in the April *Deer Industry News* and other industry mailings and publications. A limited number of hotel rooms are being reserved at the Commodore with its easy access from the airport and complimentary shuttle. In addition there are many options available in Christchurch. A listing will be

available in early April with attendees responsible for their own arrangements.

Details on satellite meetings will be finalised and publicised in April.

The emphasis is on an inexpensive and effective meeting. While we always appreciate the loyal inputs of our industry partners and sponsors, we will be giving these supporters a year's break as well, given that the industry fortunes impact on all. 

Registration will be handled through DINZ reception (info@deernz.org, 04 473 4500) or through the Producer Manager 021 719 038, 04 471 6118 tony.pearse@deernz.org

For further information please contact Tony Pearse as above.

AGM, constitutional and other matters

Annual General Meeting: 24 May 2006

Remits, Tight timelines, Plenty of discussion areas

Late remits are not useful and with an end May conference this year timelines are still demanding. Remits to the AGM are customarily submitted through Branches. Branch members are urged to submit all remits to the Association offices by **Monday, 10 April 2006** to enable them to be published in the pre-AGM *Deer Industry News* and meet our constitutional demands.

Please note that the 1998 AGM unanimously passed a resolution from the Southland Branch that requires all remits to be in the hands of the NZDFA office for circulation 45 days prior to the AGM. The Executive Committee recommended to the AGM last year that this deadline be reduced to 30 days.

This provides the opportunity to develop remits in advance at your AGMs and have time during April/May to meet again locally and fully discuss remits and other industry issues to bring forward at this important conference. Discussion of remits that arrive late and have not had a Branch input, irrespective of the wisdom of your chairman and committee, is not a responsible industry process.

It is to **everyone's advantage** for them to be published and circulated to all members. Remits will be posted on the website and circulated to Chairmen as they are received.

Matuschka Award

Nominations are called for a farmer or farming entity who or which has made a significant contribution to deer farming and the NZDFA in particular at Branch level.

The award recognises the grass roots farmer and unsung



Relaxing in Christchurch: venue for this year's industry conference.

contributor to local area activities, functions and core spirit of deer farming. It will be announced at the 2006 Deer Industry Conference dinner on the evening of 23 May 2006.

Given the nature of the Award that recognises the unsung heroes at Branch level, the Award itself will be presented at a special mid winter function in the Branch of the recipient.

Nominations should be made through the appropriate Branch. It is not a requirement of the award that the nominee be aware of the fact that a nomination has gone forward. Nominations must be submitted to the NZDFA no later than **5.00pm on 1 May 2006.**

Deer Farmers' Environmental Awards 2006

Entries are now being received for the 2006 Environmental Awards. There's an information kit with entry form available on request from reception at the Deer Industry New Zealand Office (ph 04 473 4500) or by email from the Producer Manager.

Nominations close on Friday, 3 March 2006.

The Awards have been a great success since their launch in 2001, and advanced the industry's proactive approach to environmental issues in many areas with credit. Many of the winning properties have subsequently found themselves the subject of local Branch field days.

The winners also attract some positive media interest with the environmentally friendly deer farms featuring nationwide in regional newspapers and specialist rural publications.

As a result, the deer industry enjoys a positive rapport with several environmental organisations at a time when other rural industries have had a hammering from activist groups.

Associations are continuing with our loyal sponsors for the individual awards and particularly for the production of the widely distributed colour brochures. This will again feature the environment-friendly farming techniques and profiles of the winning farms.

Elworthy Premier Award

DINZ is pleased to recognise the importance of sound environmental management as an integral part of production and marketing commitment.

The Elworthy Environmental Award winner's package includes a \$2,500 cash prize, awards dinner attendance, a commemorative native tree and plaque to feature at a special site on the winning property.

The independent judging team for 2006 will be led by Simon Stokes, a Land Management officer from Hawke's Bay Regional Council. Other judges will be from the New Zealand Landcare Trust, Fish & Game and DOC. Judging will be during the last week of March, with winners announced and the Premier Prize presented at the NZDFA Awards Dinner pre-conference in Christchurch on Tuesday, 23 May.

Executive Committee member Tim Aitken has taken on the Awards function and responsibility with the Producer Manager.

Phone the DINZ office today on 04 473 4500 for a copy of the 2006 Deer Farmers' Environmental Awards information kit. Entries are due by 4.00 pm on Friday, 3 March.

Rumpole Cup

Entries are invited for the 2006 Rumpole Cup, which is awarded to the best Branch or Associated Society newsletter. Newsletters submitted routinely to the NZDFA office will be entered. The inaugural competition for this trophy was held in 2000. Past winners have been:


- 2000 Coastal Bay of Plenty Branch
- 2001 Tongariro Branch
- 2002 Hawke's Bay Branch
- 2003 Wairarapa Branch
- 2004 Otago Branch
- 2005 Waikato Branch

The award is to promote good communication at grass roots level. Newsletters are professionally judged on: variety, topicality, quality of writing/editing, effective communication, originality and presentation. Smaller Branch newsletters which cannot afford more expensive printing (e.g. more colours) are not disadvantaged.

Please submit your entry to the Rumpole Cup, NZDFA, PO Box 10-702, Wellington by **Monday, 1 May 2006.** You can submit either one or a number of issues of the newsletter, provided it was published during the previous 12 months.

NZ Warnham & Woburn Deer Society Photo Competition

The NZ Warnham & Woburn Deer Society has generously agreed to continue supporting this popular competition, which provides an excellent showcase for our industry to the rest of the world. The best of the entrants will feature in the next edition of the successful Deer Industry Calendar again this year.

See advertisement on page 26. Entry forms will go out with the April issue of *Deer Industry News*. 



AGM constitutional matters: *NZDFA and DINZ nominations*

A) Executive Committee Nominations

Members of the NZDFA Executive Committee (two members representing the North Island and two representing the South Island) are elected for a two-year term. Members retire by rotation.

Nominations are now called for the following positions:

- Executive Committee member, North Island, one vacancy. (Current Member Tim Aitken, Waipawa, retires by rotation.)
- Executive Committee member, South Island, one vacancy. (Current member, Andrew Fraser, Waimate, retires by rotation.)

Nominations are invited for both positions. A nominee need not be resident in the Island of nomination.

Each nomination must:

- be in writing and specify the Island which the nominee seeks to represent;
- be moved and seconded by two other full members or levy-paying members of the Association **resident in the same Island as the vacancy**;
- be signed by the nominee; and
- be delivered to the Association's office by **5.00 pm on Friday, 31 March 2006**.

All nominees are entitled to submit a statement of approximately 150 words in support of their election. This statement must be sent to members at the same time as the ballot papers.

Should an election be necessary, details of postal voting and procedures, candidate profiles and the confirmation of time lines will be sent with the April edition of *Deer Industry News* or by separate post to meet deadlines. Postal voting runs for 21 days and must close seven clear days prior to the AGM on Wednesday, 24 May (i.e. **voting opens on 26 April, closing on 16 May 2006**).

B) Selection and Appointment Panel (SAP)

The role of the SAP is to make producer representative appointments to the Deer Industry New Zealand Board and to meet with those appointees at least once a year to discuss industry matters and their roles as Deer Industry New Zealand representatives.

The eight-member SAP is made up by:

- Four Executive Committee members; and
- Four non-Executive elected members. Two farmer members from each of the North and South Islands.

The elected non-Executive Committee members whose term expires and retire by rotation at the forthcoming AGM are **(NI) Roger Aitken** and **(SI) Bob Kingscote**. **Nominations are now called** for the following positions:

- SAP member, North Island, one vacancy; and
- SAP member, South Island, one vacancy.

Each nomination must be in writing and moved and seconded by two full members or levy paying members, signed by the nominee and delivered to the Association offices by **5.00 pm on Friday, 31 March 2006**.

The nominees must be full members or levy paying members. Further, nominees:

- must **not** be a member of the Deer Industry Association; and

- **cannot** hold more than a 20% interest in any organisation which is a member of the Deer Industry Association; and
- **cannot** be a candidate for membership of the Deer Industry New Zealand Board, or a current member of the Deer Industry New Zealand Board or Executive.

[The voting procedure and timing of the process is the same as that for the positions on the Executive Committee.]

C) NZDFA Appointments to Deer Industry New Zealand Board

The Ministerial approval of the Regulations to mandate a 50:50 levy share from producers and the processor exporter sector was formalised in October 2004.

The Deer Industry New Zealand Board comprises four producer representatives and four representatives from the processing/exporting sector. The producer representatives are appointed by the New Zealand Deer Farmers' Association, and notified to the Minister following recommendation by the NZDFA's Selection and Appointments panel.

Nominations are now called for the following NZDFA positions on the DINZ Board:

- Deer Industry New Zealand Board member, retiring by rotation (**Warren Moyes**) one vacancy.

Each nomination must be moved and seconded by two levy-paying members, signed by the nominee and delivered to the Association's offices before **5.00 pm on Friday, 31 March 2006**.

The Constitution (2004) refers:

- 37.10 NOMINATIONS FOR DEER INDUSTRY NEW ZEALAND:
The Selection and Appointment Panel shall appoint a Returning Officer who shall publicly announce, in writing, the names of the retiring deer farmer nominees of Deer Industry New Zealand and call for nominations for their replacement, prior to the end of March each year. Nominations shall be:
- (a) made by any two Full Members or Levy Paying Members
 - (b) in writing; and
 - (c) in the hands of the Returning Officer at a date to be specified which will be before the Annual General Meeting of the Association each year.
- 37.11 ELIGIBILITY FOR SELECTION AS NOMINEE TO DEER INDUSTRY NEW ZEALAND BOARD
All persons interested or engaged in the deer farming industry shall be eligible for nomination, with the exception of employees of Deer Industry New Zealand or of the Association. Each nominee for selection shall be required to make a written declaration of any office held or managerial position or financial interest that either the nominee or any of the nominee's immediate family or any partner or fellow shareholder in any deer farming project has in any organisation which deals directly in the products of or materials for the deer farming industry. The products of the deer farming industry refers to the commercial processing or commercial trade in venison, velvet, co-products and similar products but excludes live animals and velvet sold from the farm.
Nominations for the positions will be considered by the Selection and Appointment Panel following the 2006 AGM within 21 days of that meeting, with recommendations and appointment to the Board being advised the Minister of Agriculture at that time.

Nomination forms

Nomination forms for the Executive Committee, SAP and Deer Industry New Zealand vacancies can be obtained from the Association's office, Phone: 04 473 4500; Fax: 04 472 5549; email: info@deernz.org

Nomination forms are also available through your local Branch Chairman, Secretary or the Producer Manager and are posted on the website: www.deernz.org



Animal ID submissions show support for change

The Animal Identification and Traceability Working Group (AITWG) has released the summary of submissions and analysis of the 83 written submissions it received on its consultation report. The following report is based on the executive summary from the submission analysis.

Deer submissions mixed

The deer submissions ranged from 50 percent tacit or active support and 50 percent opposed to varying degrees on both the speed of implementation and demonstrated need. The same range of views from deer submitters in some areas were just as diverse as the mixture of views the Executive Committee had as individuals.

Of those who said they represented deer interests, 50 percent supported the proposal. Deer farmers raised different concerns from beef farmers. The market access drivers appear to be somewhat different for deer, particularly because venison is considered a niche market where New Zealand is considered to have a quality reputation.

Three submitters questioned whether individual animal identification is required for simple farm-to-slaughter management regimes or for deer. There is a need for further discussion on whether herd identification could be used in some cases for cattle and deer.

Fifty two percent of the submitters described themselves as cattle/deer owners/managers with many of the submitters having more than one main area of interest relevant to animal identification and traceability.

Broad support overall

Overall, there was broad support for most of the suggested enhancements to the current animal identification system and a number of specific suggestions as to how these enhancements might be incorporated into the current system.

Some proposed changes need further thought, particularly where submitters have pointed out practical difficulties in obtaining a high level of compliance.

The AITWG sees the level and type of submissions as an endorsement in principle of the proposed changes. Some further development of the concept is necessary and further detail on practical operation of the system proposed is to be developed by the AITWG.

In order to meet the timetable originally proposed, the AITWG wishes to establish a Governance Group made up of representatives of the affected sectors to carry the project forward and is seeking funding from Government and levy organisations to develop a detailed plan for implementing the proposed changes. It is intended that the new Governance body will be in place by March but in the meantime work will continue in planning and designing enhancements to the current animal identification system.

More detail needed

People acknowledged the uncertainty of dealing with high-level concepts rather than detailed design. Conditional support was given to proceed provided there is more detail and ongoing dialogue as the practical details are sorted out.

People in general sought a more detailed proposal. Almost half of submitters made suggestions on design elements and most submitters made suggestions for further consideration.

RFID: views polarised

Although RFID (radio frequency identification using a device that can be read when the device is passed by a suitable reader) was not proposed in the consultative report, about

one quarter of submitters inferred that this was the case and indicated some support, or outlined things to be considered in the adoption of RFID.

Views were a little polarised here. Some saw adoption of RFID devices as inevitable, given the international trends, and the means by which on-farm benefits could be best achieved. Others saw it as a significant compliance cost, particularly if animals remained on farm or were never going to be supplied to the international market.

Only one submitter said “no” to RFID, while 16 submitters indicated some standardisation of devices would be needed. A further 22 submitters said further investigation into RFID technology was needed to address such issues as tag retention and readability. Seven submitters either said RFID would not be needed for deer, or noted that the identification needs for cattle and deer were different.


Current schemes adequate?

Twelve submitters considered the current schemes (the Animal Health Board (AHB) national identification scheme or the MINDA scheme for dairy herds) should be sufficient for their needs. The AHB scheme needed to be properly implemented, e.g. reporting back at slaughter, and more actively enforced (one submission), according to some.

The AITWG’s consultative report proposes that the AHB’s national identification scheme is taken further and broadened to enable a number of information objectives to be achieved than purely bovine tuberculosis management. The two schemes would not exist side by side, with separate tags. Rather, the AHB scheme requirements would need to be integrated into the enhanced scheme, which would have one form of animal identification, leveraged for a range of defined purposes. The existence of both the AHB and the MINDA scheme clearly raises transitional issues that will need to be managed as part of moving forward.

Some convincing still needed

Ten percent said the proposed enhancements appeared to be costly and onerous; two said the scheme was being driven by tag manufacturers one said it was bureaucrat-driven, with little direct benefit on-farm, or understanding of the practical considerations. Others, however, saw this as an opportunity to leverage a number of benefits, including those on-farm. The work of the AITWG was seen as timely and needed, with the appropriate approach being taken to raise the issues and enable debate.

The responses, and the difference of opinion on proceeding forward from some submitters, does indicate that there is a group of farmers who will need to be convinced of the benefits before providing any endorsement. Unless people make the most of the opportunities for benefit from the scheme, it is likely to remain merely a compliance cost of livestock management to them. 

For a full copy of the analysis of submissions, go to the DINZ website at:

www.deernz.org/resources

and go to Animal ID & Traceability: Consultation

Cervena: Putting a face in the market

Events, public relations activity and point-of-sale material are all included in the detail of the newly unveiled 2006 Cervena® programme for the United States, aimed at strengthening New Zealand venison's position in that market.

Each element of the programme is designed to maximise effects from the total available budget.

Food service events sponsorship plays a key role, accounting for about a third of the budget. Cervena has already been placed in front of more than 20,000 chefs and food aficionados at the South Beach food and wine festival in Florida through a partnership with the event co-hosts *Florida International University School of Hospitality and Tourism Management*.

In return for sponsorship, plus provision of product, Cervena will also feature in the *Rising Stars* programme run by web-based magazine *Starchefs.com* (www.starchefs.com) that recognises up and coming talented chefs. Cervena will sponsor four awards dinners – in Los Angeles, Boston, New York City and Washington. Also, it will be promoted on the website which gets 14 million hits a month and in the industry monthly e-newsletter *The Dishrag* which is received by over 60,000 hospitality industry professionals.

Two other significant sponsorship opportunities are being negotiated.

There is nothing like personal endorsement from industry leaders for getting attention from key Cervena users and several rising chefs have been approached to become a Cervena Ambassador Chef. In this role, they will endorse Cervena in materials and on the websites, use the meat at functions to which they have been invited, present at Cervena trade and press functions and also be available for licensees to use as and when they are needed.

Brad Farmerie of New York's *Public* restaurant is the first to be appointed and, as a result, Cervena will feature on the menu of a dinner for the editorial staff of *Bon Appétit* magazine which circulates to 1.3 million food lovers.

DINZ has engaged public relations company, Resources PR, to work alongside Hedrick Marketing on a programme to



Rising culinary star, New York chef Brad Farmerie is the first of three planned new US chef ambassadors for Cervena. Described as having a 'global approach' to his cuisine at Public Restaurant, 32 year old Farmerie says his most influential mentor is the London-based Kiwi proponent of Pacific Fusion cuisine, Peter Gordon.

work with the planned events. In addition it will generate coverage for Cervena in targeted media, including trade press, food and consumer titles, newspapers and electronic media. Story ideas are being developed to sell to the target media and a new press pack is being finalised.

To support the activity, the first print-run of an eye-catching new brochure, *Cervena – Grown in Harmony with Nature* has just been finished. Targeted more at the wider trade, than the restaurant sector, the booklet brings a more personal feel to Cervena, introducing a producer face for users to relate to, more information about the natural raising of Cervena animals, cuts and recipes. A reprint of the Cervena Cutting Tips card has also been done and existing stock of Cervena aprons will be used as giveaways at some of the planned events.


A new Cervena Education CD has been adapted from the existing New Zealand Venison CD. The Cervena website is being updated with a new look and it is planned to be launched this month.

Cervena licensees are developing their own programmes to dovetail in with the planned programme of generic activity.

Andrew Duncan, of Duncan and Company says that DINZ's plans for the Cervena programme in the United States look good and, along with individual Cervena licensee activity, should help to revitalise the programme.

According to Duncan, there is still a great deal of untapped potential in the US market for Cervena venison at the current stable price levels. "DINZ activities, as agreed with exporters, will help lift awareness of the qualities of Cervena in the crucial food service and restaurant sector."

Angus Cleland, Terra Pacific Marketing, which markets Mountain River Cervena in the United States is also enthusiastic about Cervena's efforts to support the US market.

"We think the new materials provide a fresh, exciting feel to Cervena. We look forward to a great year ahead." 



Mark Shadbolt, Cervena farmer from Akaroa, brings a personal face to New Zealand deer farming in the new Cervena™ brochure drawing US attention to the meat's 'all natural' features as a farm-raised, no additive, grass-fed product.

Copies of the new brochure are available from DINZ Venison Marketing Services Manager, Innes Moffat on 04-471 6111 or innes.moffat@deernz.org or via www.deernz.org.nz/resources



(Above) Seated above Lord's Cricket Ground: 42 of the UK's top wine writers also tried New Zealand venison canapés.

(Above right) Perfection: Warren Adamson and Miles Kirby plating up the New Zealand venison canapés behind the screens at Lord's.




Lord's above

The media pod at Lord's cricket ground in London was the venue for a wine tasting with a difference in mid-January. Forty two of the UK's top wine writers gathered for an in-depth look at New Zealand syrah variety wines and were also treated to New Zealand venison canapés, prepared by Miles Kirby.

Organised by New Zealand Winegrowers, DINZ and PPCS were also sponsors of the event. Warren Adamson, Director UK & Europe for New Zealand Winegrowers, thanked them for their support.

"The comments from the audience at the time highlighted the direct benefits of linking New Zealand red wines with New Zealand venison," he says.

"We always talk about how a wine is complemented by the correct food match. It is only through people experiencing this first hand that that we can truly demonstrate this. The dishes were fantastic and the combinations created a very engaging conversation and debate. Everyone I talked to has been very positive and complimentary about the whole event." 

Targeting athletes with a *Roar*

Western Southland velvet producers Gray and Wendy Wilson are just two of several taking the future into their own hands and launching a new velvet product for the younger sector.


Together with two silent partners, the Wilsons are embarking on a marketing campaign for *Roar*, a new athletic performance product.

The Wilsons run three large velvet herds, producing 4,500 kg of velvet a year at Eastern Bush in Western Southland. As well as trying to improve on-farm production during a very difficult period for the deer industry, the Wilsons' focus has been on the marketplace and changing people's perception of velvet products.

"After talking to people in advertising and marketing, we decided to start *Roar*," Gray Wilson says.

"We were also convinced that velvet has a great future," he says, adding that they were both impressed with the work scientist Craig Broeder did with athletes, after hearing him speak at the velvet antler symposium in Queenstown last year. "He is a good guy to have endorsing the product."

A marketing campaign has been finalised that will take place over the next year but details are commercially sensitive at this stage, he says.

Roar velvet sells in bottles of 40 x 300mg capsules, retailing for \$20 plus post and packaging. It can be bought directly through the website, www.roarvelvet.co.nz, or by emailing the Wilsons at roarvelvet@woosh.co.nz 



Attention is drawn to *Roar* velvet's new encapsulated velvet product through its memorable new poster.

recipe



Szechuan Spiced Cervena® with Pickled Vegetables, Spiced Miso Dressing and Wasabi Mayonnaise

An Asian-inspired dish to tempt your guests. Serves four appetisers.

Ingredients

- 600g Cervena leg rounds (fillets)
- Szechuan spice mix
- 50g szechuan pepper corns, 20g cumin seeds, 20g coriander seeds, 10g black pepper corns.
- Miso Dressing
- 20g palm sugar
- 2 egg yolks
- 80 ml rice wine vinegar
- 120 ml grape-seed oil
- 50g light miso paste
- 10 ml (tbsp sesame oil)
- 10g chilli paste (sambal Oelek)
- 20 ml Kikkoman soya sauce
- Marinated Asian vegetable salad
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1 tbsp sesame oil
- 2 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- ¼ cup sake
- ½ tsp mustard oil
- Fresh coriander leaves
- 1 tbsp pickled sushi ginger sliced thinly
- ¼ cucumber, peeled and deseeded
- 2 spring onions, cut into long thin strips
- 8 shiitake mushrooms, sliced thinly
- 1 celery stem, peeled and sliced into long thin strips

Method

1. Combine all the Szechuan spice mix ingredients together. Heat in a wok and grind finely.
2. Make the Miso Sauce. Whisk the egg yolks, sugar and vinegar together add the miso then slowly blend in the oils until a mayonnaise-like consistency. Add the remaining seasonings to taste and check the seasoning.
3. Marinated Asian salad. Mix the dressing ingredients - lemon juice, sesame oil, rice wine vinegar, sake, mustard oil, coriander leaves and sushi ginger. Pour over the prepared cucumber, spring onions, mushrooms and stand for 4 hours.

Preparation

Season the Cervena in the Szechuan spice mix for at least 1 hour and then sear in a little oil until rare. Cool and partly freeze. Slice very thinly and place on the bed of pickled vegetables. Pour over the sauce and garnish with toasted sesame seeds.

Market Talk: Opportunities in China

Margaret Hsu is the president of consulting firm Pro Re Nata Inc, which specialises in regulatory affairs of the Chinese pharmaceutical industry. She has helped companies such as Smith Kline & French Laboratories, Warner Lambert, Johnson & Johnson, Organon and Eli Lilly overcome regulatory and non-tariff trade barriers in China. She has recently assisted Deer Industry New Zealand with regulations limiting and allowing for velvet and co-products trade to China.

Neatly surmising New Zealand velvet's position in the Chinese market, Hsu says, "Until New Zealand's deer industry has a long-term, lawful means to enter and sell deer velvet and other deer co-products in China, the industry as a whole will have little leverage."

After a very close look at the regulations, she says it is "little wonder" the path of least resistance to the market for velvet and co-products is through the unofficial route of Hong Kong. Since import regulations changed in mid 2005, co-products and velvet can no longer be imported into China without a bilateral trade protocol signed between the two countries.

In addition, New Zealand velvet does not have access to China as a raw material for Chinese traditional medicine, although it can be imported as an agricultural product and used in general foods, health foods and cosmetics.

Of concern, is the technicality that the Chinese Pharmacopoeia does not allow for the use of velvet from New Zealand deer species. The organisation overseeing this area is the China State Food and Drug Administration. It says velvet would have to be registered as a 'medicinal material', although this can take up to three years and is expensive. The apparent taxonomic misunderstanding is being addressed by DINZ.

"Like water flowing from cupped hands, the trade finds ways around this, although having formal access is the Holy Grail," Hsu says.

"All of us doing business in China will continue to encounter challenges in the years ahead but as the single largest, unified, yet unsaturated market left on earth, even a few economically lean years now and again should prove well worth the effort. The insights reaped in this market come only with direct involvement. If the next two decades are anything like the last 20 years, they can be expected to be fertile in experiences and fat in rewards."

Deer Industry New Zealand's General Manager Marketing, Daimien Reynolds, says DINZ will continue to work with Hsu and the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to improve access. On behalf of the industry, the New Zealand Food Safety Authority has begun the process of negotiating a bilateral trade protocol with its Chinese counterpart. 



Happy Chinese New Year: this year is the year of the Dog.

Venison

There has been no improvement in schedule prices in recent times, despite the weakening of the New Zealand dollar. The Euro rate is still 2.5% higher than 2005 and 19% higher than 2001. Volumes of chilled New Zealand venison sales have been good, while levels of frozen are described as 'steady'. However, volumes of venison coming out of New Zealand are impacting on prices in Europe.

Schedule

- Despite some moves in the right direction in recent weeks, a weaker currency has not resulted in an improvement in schedule prices. The \$3.45 published average schedule for AP stags in Week 5 (source Agrifax) is the lowest DINZ has recorded. The previous low was \$3.53 in July 1991.
- Since peaking at 0.60 euro cents in early December 2005, the New Zealand dollar has dropped by about 6%. Over this same period, the kiwi has eased 2% against the US dollar. Despite this fall, the Euro rate is still 2.5% higher than it was at the same time in 2005, and 19% higher than 2001.

Exports

- European distributors report that sales of chilled venison went well this year. The cold weather leading up to, and including, Christmas encouraged consumers to buy venison. This was after the long 'Indian summer' Europe enjoyed which had subdued demand in October.
- While volumes of chilled venison sales were good, levels of frozen were described as 'steady', with pressure on leg cuts due to attractively priced middle cuts. The market

for manufacturing product and boneless B grade is now described as tighter, with some resulting upward pressure on prices. While the volumes have been cleared, they have been priced at a level to allow this to happen. Hoped for improvements in chilled and frozen prices have not been achieved due to the volumes of venison coming onto the market.

- The volume of venison exported to 'all Europe' in the three months for the game season – September, October, November 2005 was 6,370 tonnes. This is 70% more than the equivalent period in 2002.
- The volume of chilled venison going into a largely static market has increased from 1,100 tonnes to 1,500 tonnes, over 35% more. So, not only has this increase in volume pushed prices per kg down, the percentage of higher value chilled cuts has fallen from 30% to 24% over this crucial period.
- Although marketers have done a good job in marketing the increase in production, they report again that prices in Europe are not likely to improve until the volume of venison coming out of New Zealand reduces.

Velvet

While velvet export volumes held relatively steady to the end of November, compared to last year, export value values took a tumble by 28%. Indications are that volumes through the pools are falling, with prices in the later part of the season strengthening as a consequence. There are reports of an improving Korean economy, though private consumption is 'anaemic'.

Velvet exports

- Export volume for the 12 months ending November 2005 is 246 tonnes dried equivalent, an increase of 1% over the 12 months ending November 2004 (243 tonnes).
- Export value for the 12 months ending November 2005 is \$21 million, representing a 28% decline over the previous year (\$29 million).

Pools

- The volume of SA, A, B and C grade sold through the pools to date is approximately 120 tonnes, 15% down compared to the same time last year. While some farmers may be holding on to stock, it appears volume of production is down on last year.
- Prices in the later part of the season have showed a strengthening trend, with tenders becoming more competitive to secure velvet.
- The overall weighted average of velvet traded through the pools is about \$51.

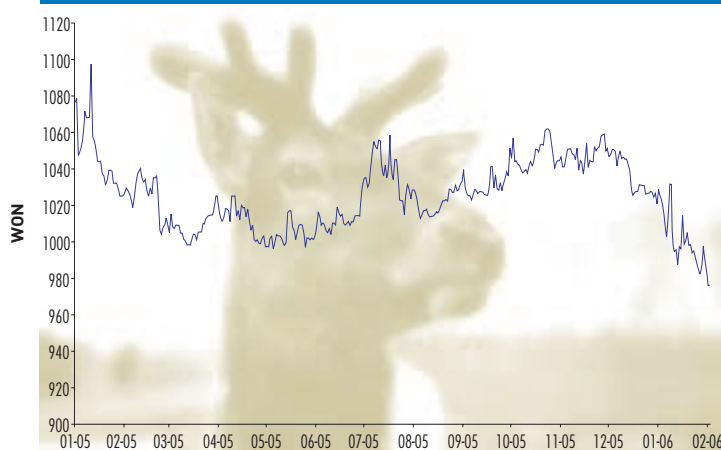
International markets

- In Korea, the government reports an improving economy,

with indicators to support the claims. However, economic commentators still report private consumption as 'anaemic'.

- The New Zealand dollar has weakened against the Korean won over the past year by 11% (655 from 736, see graph). This follows a sharp increase in the strength of the Won against the US dollar. The Won is approaching the 10 year average of 640 Korean won to the New Zealand dollar.

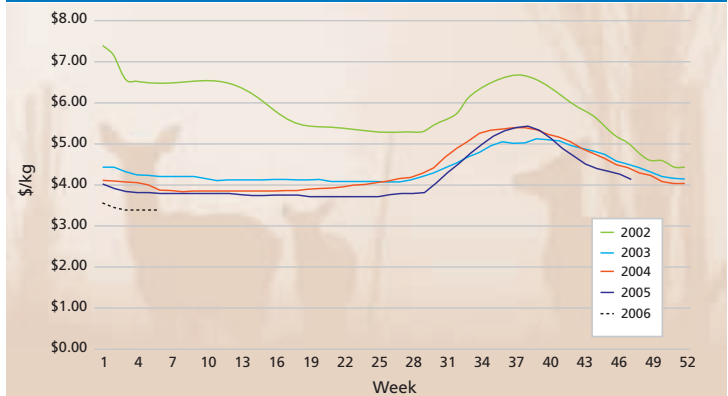
Korean Won To the New Zealand Dollar 2005-2006



Promotional activity

- DINZ has supported individual retail promotion activities with key customers to highlight the availability of New Zealand venison at retail through the game season.
- Stores promoting New Zealand venison ran in-store tastings and advertised in their house magazines.
- In-store tastings in Frankfurt and Stuttgart provided samples to over 1,000 shoppers and resulted in one store selling out of venison and having to order in additional supplies. The store in question had invited known gourmets on their database for a special tasting day.
- In-store demonstrations were undertaken with a large chain of cash and carries in selected regions in Germany leading up to Christmas.
- Features in store magazines advertised New Zealand venison in large stores in northern and eastern Germany. These stores featured venison in their shop restaurants as a weekly special which proved to be very popular as the winter festive season approached.

WEEKLY AVERAGE SCHEDULE - 60KG AP STAG



Source: Agrifax

MARKET INDICATOR PRICES (BONE IN HAUNCH)



Source: PPCS

- In-market prices remain at similar levels to last season.
- Demand for Russian velvet has reportedly fallen following recent concerns over its authenticity. Samples of Russian velvet were tested by Oriental Medicine Doctors (OMDs) and found to have strong traces of Elk. Importers claim that over the years Elk blood has crossed with Russian Maral and that is the reason; others say this is a cover-up of widespread mixing. OMDs do not know what to believe, although they are questioning whether spending almost twice as much for Russian velvet is justified. New Zealand velvet is benefiting from this, with slightly stronger demand.
- The SET temporary reduction (implemented in March 2004) expired at the end of 2005. The Ministry of Finance and Economy, which has extended the tax cut to stimulate private consumption twice, reported it would not extend the tax cut again because it expected private consumption to improve in 2006.
- A direct mail campaign was mailed to over 9,000 Korean OMDs in January. The direct mail comprised a generic brochure on New Zealand velvet and a research update. The direct mail reinforced the quality and authenticity of New Zealand velvet during a time when OMD trust of Russian velvet is at an all time low.
- In Taiwan, a local market research firm has concluded that Council of Agriculture's estimate of the market size, on which the justification and level of the quota of five tonnes is based, are wrong. The company says in fact the market size is at least twice the size, and growing. This information will be used by DINZ and MAF to lobby against the quota.
- New Zealand Food Safety Authority has begun negotiating a bilateral trade protocol for deer products with the Chinese quarantine administration. When signed, this will allow for formal access for venison and co-products to Chinese processing markets, but would require each deer slaughter premises to be registered with the Chinese authorities. Further hurdles for New Zealand velvet will remain (see Margaret Hsu article on page 15).
- DINZ is undertaking a joint promotion with a New Zealand company promoting a velvet-for-pets supplement project in the Israel market. A wholesaler with the leading market share in supplies to the country's 400 vets has agreed to distribute the New Zealand velvet product.
- DINZ is part of a New Zealand-led initiative in the Chinese retail market in which a pharmaceutical company will test a range of velvet products with the intent to launch one or more of the finished products to their consumer markets.

Drenching in the dark?

Deer farmers may not be making the best use of the available tools to control internal parasites in their animals, but a lack of good information could be hindering an improvement.

A recent Massey University Deer Research Group study¹ led by Professor Peter Wilson, submitted for publication in the New Zealand Veterinary Journal says the wide range of parasite control practices used by New Zealand deer farmers, coupled with under-utilisation of veterinary advice, could mean anthelmintic treatments are missing their mark.

The authors estimate that internal parasites cost the industry around \$2.8 million a year in lost production through growth retardation.

While most farmers dosed to the weight of the heaviest animal, this was mainly based on guesswork. While many farmers tend to over-estimate weights when guessing, there was still a possibility that many animals are being under-dosed, which can lead to a build-up in parasite resistance. There was a danger that resistance to anthelmintics in deer parasites could come to match that experienced in sheep and cattle.

The authors also note that there is a lack of scientific knowledge about the epidemiology of internal parasites in deer, which limits the ability of deer vets to advise their clients about control strategies.

The Massey study was based on a postal questionnaire distributed to a random 10% of farmers on the industry database (500 deer farmers) in 2004, seeking detailed information about their use of anthelmintic treatments during the previous 12 months. The researchers received about 200 replies which were suitable for analysis, covering about 115,000 deer, or 7% of the national herd.

The replies showed a wide variation in practices. Of those surveyed, 94% drenched at least once in the previous 12 months. Twenty-two percent treated weaners only, 53% treated all classes and 25% treated selected classes.

Only about 4% were using faecal egg counts or larvae counts to monitor parasite burdens. The biggest group in the survey use weight gain in weaners and body score in adults as an indicator of parasitism, but symptoms such as coughing or scours were also used.

About 13-14% of farmers reported coughing and scouring believed to be caused by worms, and 4-5% reported

mortalities. Those figures suggest that production losses associated with internal parasites is common, because most cases would not be identified.

Moxidectin was the most widely used treatment. Reasons for choice of product varied, but perceived efficacy was the most common, followed by persistence of action, ease of use, whether it was licensed for deer, and veterinary advice. In what may be depressing news for those selling the treatments, price and product giveaways rarely motivated product choice.

Weaners received a wide variety of treatments – 3.2 doses on average, but ranging from one to 13 treatments. Age of first treatment ranged from two to 11 months. Treatment intervals also varied widely.


The authors said the treatment patterns for weaners mirrored that from earlier studies, but noted that longer-acting products had since become available. This indicated that, in some cases, farmers may be treating animals more often than necessary. In the case of adult deer, many farmers reported not treating animals and no indication of parasitism – a sign that routine treatment of adults may not always be necessary and could contribute to resistance.

They also suggested that many do not wean or commence anthelmintic treatment until after autumn, when parasitism is more of a problem. Therefore, there could be a relationship between weaning date, anthelmintic start date and weight gains in weaners, which warrants further investigation.

Big variations in the treatment of yearlings and adults was also noted.

While the authors noted that clinical parasitism in deer herds can be associated with poor management decisions, they noted that there is a need for low-cost, meaningful indicators of parasite burdens – especially as the size of the burden can vary considerably between animals within a mob.

“...lack of objective knowledge of the epidemiology and control of deer parasites, the role of subclinical parasitism and its diagnosis, the current efficacy of commonly used anthelmintics in deer and the role of alternative methods for parasite control, limit the veterinarian’s confidence in advising on parasite control in deer and determining the most appropriate control measures on individual farms. This survey has highlighted these deficiencies,” the authors concluded.

This survey was commissioned and funded by Fort Dodge Animal Health Ltd. DINZ provided assistance with questionnaire mailing and independent access to the industry database to protect deer farmer confidentiality. 

For further information contact: P.R.Wilson@massey.ac.nz

Thanks for your input!

The Massey survey involved a questionnaire of general farm data, anthelmintic usage policy and procedures, anthelmintic programmes for weaner and older deer, general information and understanding of parasite management practices. It was posted to 500 deer farmers in November 2004. Those surveyed were promised feedback on the results of the research, and this article provides that information. The researchers would like to express their appreciation to those who took part, for the time and effort they put in.

¹ A survey of anthelmintic use and internal parasite control in farmed deer, F Castillo-Alcala, PR Wilson, WE Pomroy, SO Hoskin, Institute of Veterinary, Animal and Biomedical Sciences, Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

How valuable is selection for early calving?

By Jason Archer (AgResearch) and Peter Amer (Abacus Biotech)

The quest for earlier calving receives considerable attention, as it is seen as a mechanism for making significant improvements in productivity and efficiency of deer farming. Genetics is often seen by farmers as the key to early calving and some of the recent research is confirming that Eastern deer do have significantly earlier conception than English genotypes.

But how valuable is earlier calving? As with any other farming practice, the value depends on how we can capture the gains and what impact early calving has on the farm system. The major benefits proposed from earlier calving are associated with better aligning production with market demand (and so obtaining premiums for animals killed at peak schedule) and with seasonal growth patterns (thereby utilising grass more efficiently).

Alignment with market demand

What impact does earlier calving have on the price received for stock? The answer obviously depends on how much earlier calving occurs, and how this translates into heavier weaners coming into spring. For the purposes of this article, we will assume that we are able to shift calving earlier by 21 days, and kill animals at a constant weight (rather than taking the advantage as a heavier carcass). What is the impact of this on weight of weaners?

There is very little data on calf growth increases from early calving. Analysis of data from Invermay suggested a weight advantage in the order of 350g for every day earlier the calf is born. However there were no early calves in this data set, so we need to be careful about extrapolating what happens in a 'normal' calving to what might happen if calving is earlier. It might be argued that a hind calving early has higher quality feed available to support early lactation and so growth rates at the upper end of the performance range might be achieved over this period. To cover these scenarios, we have assumed growth rates over this extra 21 days to be 350 g/day or 550 g/day. This translates to a weight advantage of 7.35 kg or 11.55 kg at weaning and we assume the advantage is maintained right through to slaughter.

By modelling the impact of heavier animals on kill pattern, we can calculate the impact of calving earlier on average price (Table 1). Note that the figures given are the increase in average price across all stags for the early calving herd compared to the normal calving herd, and the premium for individual animals slaughtered early in the season will be higher than this.

The results show that the average price premium is highly dependent on both how much extra growth is achieved and how close the farm is to killing deer on the peak venison schedule (we have assumed a schedule which has a \$1.50/kg spring premium until 26 September, with the premium declining to base schedule level by 25 November). For a



Earlier calving won't give a better feed supply/demand fit in all farming systems, but capturing the spring schedule produces more profit. Photo: Dot Mullay, Warnham & Woburn Photo Competition 2002.

farm which is already killing some stags during spring, there are substantial price increases to be achieved through calving earlier, as heavier animals coming into spring means that a larger proportion of the stags are killed while spring premiums are available. Our model indicated that the average price received for stags increases by between \$23 and \$35 per animal. There is some impact on average price of hinds, but as hinds are killed later, a smaller proportion of hinds are killed when premiums are available and so improvements in price received are smaller than for stags. However, for a 500-hind herd keeping replacements, these premiums translate to an additional gross income of over \$6,000 or \$10,000 depending on the calf growth rate assumed.

On a farm where deer are killed later anyway (e.g. due to environmental constraints on calf growth performance), calving early has a much lesser impact on average price received. This is principally because although average kill date is shifted forward, only a relatively small proportion of stags are killed in the premium schedule period which diminishes the impact on average price. However, early calving still leads to an additional gross income of \$800 to \$2,000 for a 500 hind herd. If early calving was combined with other changes to improve growth of weaners on this farm, then the combined impact would be greater than each improvement in isolation.

continued on page 20

Johne's vaccine trial in Red deer

By Dr Colin Mackintosh and Bryan Thompson, AgResearch Invermay

Gudair™ vaccine reduces the impact of Johne's but doesn't prevent infection. And because it sensitises deer to the skin test for Tb, it may not be possible to use the vaccine in every situation. These were two of the key findings from an Invermay trial using Gudair and an experimental Johne's vaccine in Red deer.

Background

Johne's disease is emerging as a productivity problem on deer farms in New Zealand and other countries, including Australia, United States, Canada and UK. It has the potential to cause significant economic losses, especially where there are clinical cases in yearlings.

It is not possible with current technology to eliminate infection from a herd, and therefore control revolves around minimising the number of clinical cases and reducing the degree of contamination on the farm. Testing the breeding hinds with the Paralisa test, developed by the Disease Research Laboratory at the University of Otago, and culling positive animals has been shown to reduce the problem, but is not always economic or practicable.

Farms who buy in weaners to grow and finish for venison are in a difficult position to prevent the disease and may unknowingly buy infected animals. In this and other situations, it may be preferable to vaccinate young deer against this disease. However, at the moment there are no Johne's vaccines licensed for use in deer. There is a concern that vaccination may sensitise deer to the Tb skin test because the organisms that cause Johne's disease and Tb are very similar. There is also no evidence to show that the vaccines are effective in deer.

Trial for two vaccines

A trial was conducted at AgResearch Invermay to test the efficacy of Gudair and an experimental vaccine containing plant lipids as an adjuvant instead of mineral oil, which Gudair contains. Work in sheep and cattle has shown that although mineral oils help promote a strong immune response, they also provoke a vigorous local reaction to the injection and often cause an unsightly abscess.

The two vaccinated groups of 30 animals each were matched with an unvaccinated control group. Ten weeks after vaccination all 90 deer were given an oral challenge with live virulent *Mycobacterium paratuberculosis* to simulate natural exposure to Johne's infection. They were intensively monitored for 12 months. The animals were all slaughtered at 14-15 months of age, the intestinal tracts were carefully examined, and samples were taken for culture and histopathology.

Results

Unexpectedly, none of the animals developed **clinical** Johne's disease. This may have been due to a lower than planned number of live organisms in the challenge.

The trial showed that the Gudair vaccine significantly reduced the severity of the intestinal lesions due to Johne's disease compared with the control group. The lipid vaccine did not significantly reduce the severity of the lesions.

Early calving... continued from page 19

Table 1. Impact of calving 21 days earlier on average price received compared to an equivalent 'normal' calving*.

Average stag kill date	26 October		25 December	
	350 g/day	550 g/day	350 g/day	550 g/day
Stag calves	+\$23.50	+\$35.66	+\$3.52	+\$8.97
Hind calves	+\$6.41	+\$13.91	+\$0.02	+\$0.24

*Scenarios modelled include calf growth rates during early lactation at 350 or 550 g/day, and farms currently killing stags at an average date of 26 October or 25 December.

Alignment with feed supply


The other gains which might go with earlier calving (and earlier slaughter) arise from a potentially better match between feed supply (both quantity and quality) and animal demand. Calving earlier means hinds are lactating while feed quality is still high in spring and pasture is relatively cheap. An earlier average kill date will also mean feed savings in summer and autumn. On the other hand, weaners will be heavier going into winter and hinds will be in a more advanced state of pregnancy, both factors which may increase winter feed requirements slightly.

Earlier calving and earlier slaughter will change the pattern of animal demand. How this fits into the farming system will depend very much on the feed supply profile of different

regions and individual properties. What (if any) other stock classes are integrated with the venison production system will also have a large impact.

Thus generalised recommendations on how benefits from early calving accrue in the farm system are difficult to make, and deer farmers need to carefully consider the fit with their own particular farming system.

It should not be assumed that early calving will automatically produce a better fit between pasture growth and animal demand. It is likely that properties with longer winters and later springs will not be as suited to early calving as those with good early spring growth. Models run using Farmax® have indicated that, at least in some situations, an earlier calving (and earlier kill) does not always provide a better match between feed supply and demand unless feed savings in summer and autumn are able to be shifted to winter. However, in the scenarios we have examined, the financial outcome from meeting the spring schedule has always produced a more profitable outcome.

The alignment of production with market requirements is a key benefit of earlier calving, and meeting the spring premium schedules remains as a major driver of profitability for most venison systems. Earlier calving is one pathway towards this, which should be exploited by the deer industry. Identifying and using genetics with the ability to calve earlier will therefore improve profitability of deer farming. 

The Gudair-vaccinated animals also had significantly fewer gross lesions and significantly less severe histopathological lesions compared with the animals in the Control and Lipid vaccine groups. At slaughter, none of the Gudair-vaccinated animals had gross lesions in their intestinal tract whereas four lipid and six control animals had lesions. On a histopathological lesion severity scale of 0-12, the Gudair animals averaged 2.0, compared with 3.4 and 3.6 for the lipid and control groups respectively.

The Gudair injection site reactions were all less than 50 mm in diameter and resolved to small nodules after six weeks. At slaughter there were a few residual nodules on the skin or carcass that were easily trimmed off. The lipid vaccine had negligible site reactions.

The animals were all skin-tested for Tb (MCT) three months after challenge and more than 90% of animals in all three groups reacted to the test.


They were then given a comparative skin test (CCT) three months after the MCT. Almost all of the deer had significantly larger reactions at the avian site, but a small number of animals had equivocal responses (i.e. the swelling at the bovine site was the same as the avian site). Four months later the CCT was repeated and all animals had clearly avian reactions.

There were no significant differences in the number of animals infected in the three groups, with 3, 3 and 1 deer negative for culture in the Gudair, Lipid and Control groups respectively.

Conclusion

Gudair significantly reduced the severity of the disease but did not prevent infection. This is a similar finding to efficacy trials with the vaccine in sheep and cattle. It suggests that Gudair could be effective in reducing clinical losses on deer farms and reducing the problems associated with gross lesions in the slaughter plant. However, vaccination with Gudair sensitises deer to the skin test for Tb and therefore it may be inappropriate to vaccinate deer that are to be kept as replacements in the breeding or velveted herds, especially if there is a risk of infection with bovine Tb. This might restrict the use of the vaccine to weaners destined for slaughter before 18 months of age, so that they can be 'works monitored' for Tb instead of skin-tested.

Acknowledgements

This work was funded by DEEResearch and FRST. It was supported by the Tb Lab at AgResearch Wallaceville who did all the culture work, the Disease Research Laboratory, University of Otago who did all the immunological testing and Gary Clark, who did all the histopathology. The trial was approved by the Invermay Animal Ethics Committee. 

Deer Biology Congress Czech Republic, August 2006

AgResearch's Chunyi Li is one of the plenary speakers at the 6th International Deer Biology Congress, Deer in a Changing World, to be held in Prague, Czech Republic, 7-11 August 2006. He will be delivering a presentation on Deer antler regeneration and stem cell research – recent progress.

The congress will cover all aspects of deer science. Session topics will include:

- Deer responses to global environmental change
- Seasonal and non-seasonal deer – Arctic to Tropic
- Censusing and modelling populations
- Conservation of free-ranging populations: conflicts of interest
- Deer management
- Reproduction
- Diseases of deer
- Antler biology
- Genetics and evolution
- Problems of deer overabundance
- Ecology and management of invasive species
- Management of endangered deer
- Behaviour and welfare

This year's congress will continue in the tradition of its predecessors. The 'ancestor' to all was the conference on Antler Development in Cervidae, in 1982 in Kingsville, Texas. This inspired the first International Deer Biology Congress (1983, Dunedin, New Zealand), *Biology of Deer Production*, organised by Ken Drew and Peter Fennessy.

Since then, congresses have been held in Starkville, USA (1990), Edinburgh, UK (1994), Kaposvar, Hungary (1998), and Quebec City, Canada (2002).

For information and updates on the 6th International Deer Biology Congress: www.af.czu.cz/idbc



Deer Watch: Pania Flint



When Massey University deer lecturer and researcher Pania Flint was eight years old, she calmly informed her parents she would become a veterinarian. The youngster never wavered from this commitment, and in 2003 delivered on her promise when she graduated from Massey with a Bachelor of Veterinary Science.

Born in Westport to an Australian father and Kiwi mother, Pania's family moved to Tasmania during her early childhood. It was a rural life and with fairly basic conditions, no electricity and – Pania insists without a trace of irony – the occasional meal of possum stew (her father was at the time making a living tanning possum hides).

The family moved back to New Zealand when Pania was nine, and as she grew up, her love of animals also grew. Horse riding is a special love and she is a keen one-day eventer. Her young family (children aged two, six and nine) have inherited their mother's love of riding.

As an undergraduate at Massey she had only occasional contact with deer and deer farming – something she found frustrating, as the animals fascinated her.

Not long after graduating – her degree was interspersed with child raising – Pania didn't hesitate when Peter Wilson offered her a deer-related job with research opportunities in the Massey University Deer Research Group.

She's now dividing her time equally between her PhD and a

lecturing job mainly on the production animal side: sheep, cattle, deer and goats. She is teaching production animal veterinary science mainly to fourth and fifth-year students, and also doing some clinical work with goats and deer.

Her PhD project, which she expects to take about four to five years, was backdated to the beginning of her first deer research project in 2004: for VARNZ on behalf of the deer industry looking into the best method for putting in ring block when velveting deer. The project looks into defining the best method for farmers and vets to apply the drug. Pania is also researching stag deaths associated with xylazine, on behalf of the NVSB. She is concerned that the deaths are probably under-reported and therefore it is more difficult to identify the risk factors and make recommendations for improved practices.

“Unfortunately there is often a low rate of return when you're collecting data from busy vets and farmers, and that makes it harder to identify recurring factors. There's no doubt that there are problem farms where these deaths are more common – but we need more information if we are to be able to help.”

While the stag death monitoring is an ongoing project, Pania says her most significant work for the deer industry at present is the development of a tourniquet to prevent lignocaine residues in velvet. It's a fascinating project for a variety of reasons, Pania says.

“This is an unusual project because it brings together so many factors – not just veterinary science, but also chemistry, physics, consumer affairs, marketing and on-farm management practices.”

The science itself is challenging and cutting edge. The stags, specially purchased for the project and run on the Massey University Deer Research Unit, are anaesthetised and tiny polystyrene balls treated with a fluorescent dye are injected into the bloodstream. During testing, the fluorescence reveals just how effective the tourniquet has been.

With funding approval for further work still being finalised, Pania cannot say too much about the next steps in the research, but she says priority is being given to getting an acceptable device available to the industry as soon as possible. Of course 'acceptable' has to cover both animal welfare and food safety requirements as well as the practical requirements of vets and farmers.

Pania says the facilities at Massey, including a new hydraulic physical restraint, are ideal for the research. She is also quick to praise anaesthetists Craig Johnson and Jo Murrell from the Massey veterinary hospital for their help with the work along with many other staff members without whom the project would not have succeeded “It's also a great project for the many fellow postgraduate and visiting students to get involved in,” she adds.

Pania is very much enjoying her work with deer, her teaching and, amazingly for someone who works at Palmerston North, life 'at the beach'. She manages the work-life balance with her family in a cottage near Himutang Beach, a mere 25-minute commute from Massey, and handy to grazing for the family's two horses. 🐾

- **To report xylazine reactions contact Pania Flint at Massey University, ph 06 356 9099 ext 7757, or 027 490 99 77, email p.flint@massey.ac.nz**

WANTED!

MORE NEW ZEALAND DEER SCIENTISTS

Great career opportunities will exist in science, including the deer research field, if New Zealand ups its investment in science and technology to 2-3 percent of gross domestic product, as called for by Government.

According to AgResearch Chief Executive Dr Andy West, New Zealand will need about 1,300 more scientists a year for the next 10 years if New Zealand is to grow its research investment to at least two percent of gross domestic product (GDP) of the three percent called for by Government.

Speaking at the launch of his organisation's 'Careers in Science' brochure aimed at encouraging school students to consider science careers, he pointed at statistics showing that about 48 percent of New Zealand's science workforce is pretty likely to retire in the next 20 years. This means about 7,100 scientists, research engineers and technicians will be needed in that time just to keep the scientific and technical workforce at its current level.

According to the Association of Crown Research Institutes, total government and private sector investment in New Zealand research, science and technology in 2004 was 1.17 percent of GDP in 2004 (\$1.6 billion). Compare that with Australia's 1.6 percent and the OECD average of 2.26 percent.

If the two percent of GDP target is achieved, Andy West maintains it will mean a 71 percent increase in the research and development workforce is required – 10,500 more scientists, research engineers and technicians over and above those replacing retirees over the next 20 years.

"Science and technology are vital to the prosperity of the pastoral sector, the engine room of New Zealand's economy. New Zealand farmers have only been able to remain



Dr Andy West: New Zealand will need 1300 more scientists a year for 10 years to grow research investment.

internationally competitive on the back of great scientific research."

Chief of Massey University's Deer Research Group, Professor Peter Wilson, welcomes the encouragement of increased funds for research and development and the fact that more young New Zealanders should be attracted into science as a result.

However, he calls for better salaries and a better career structure to encourage individuals to consider research as a career path. "Young people are not stupid," he says. "Graduates look at the recent past as a guide for their future and have seen an industry without structure or permanence."

In his view, to date, science research has been 'casualised', leading many experts in very specific fields to spend an 'enormous amount of time' constantly seeking funds to continue their work. Money needs to be spent on developing and maintaining skills, he says, citing the example of the UK government shutting

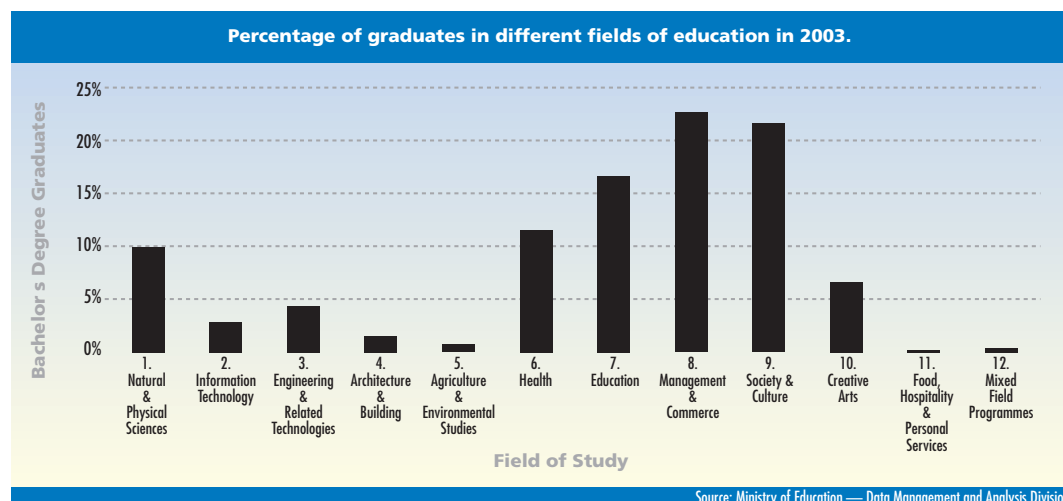
down the salmonella surveillance unit, a month before the salmonella in eggs scare broke out in the late 1980s. "It's not an effective way to run science to serve the needs of the country."

"Scientists take a long-term view. It's part of their persona and it's a life-time commitment," he says.

There has been a focus in recent years on molecular biology but the funders of research now need to ensure there is a balance between near-market/added value research and production, Wilson says. "Producers need to be able to constantly improve on their productivity rates to keep ahead of the market."

Deer industry research received just under \$1.2 million from Deer Industry New Zealand through VARNZ and DEEResearch in 2004-2005, with a similar grant of \$1.2 million made to the Game Industry Research Trust for research in 2005-06. 

- The AgResearch *Careers in Science* brochure can be viewed at www.agresearch.co.nz/people/Careers_in_Science.pdf



Focus farms update

The Otago and Southland Focus Farms both came through last winter in good shape, and were well set up for the upcoming season.

The projects are being supported through the Sustainable Farming fund, with the involvement of AgResearch Invermay, Otago Regional Council, Environment Southland, Deersouth, Otago and Southland Branches of NZDFA and PGG Wrightson. Facilitator for both is farm consultant Richard Copland.

Otago Focus Farm

Grant and Angela Cochrane farm at Glenomaru, Balclutha. Of their 595 ha of hill and flat to rolling land, 205 ha is deer fenced. The Eastern Reds are run as two separate venison and velvet mobs.

Good weather over spring should have meant good fawn survival and calving percentages. Results for some mobs were disappointing and reasons (e.g. paddock suitability and other underlying conditions) are being investigated. Blood tests are being carried out.

Overall results:

MA hinds paddock %	=	90.6% fawns weaned
2nd calvers paddock %	=	77.6% fawns weaned
1st calvers paddock %	=	74.2% fawns weaned
Overall paddock %	=	80.6% fawns weaned

(Calving % to the stag not available at press time.)

Fawn growth rates and hind condition are very pleasing. On 25 January 2006, 154 Red x Red fawns out of MA hinds were weighed:

Stag fawns:	44.7 kg
Hind fawns	40.7 kg

Weaners have been weighed as part of the National Deer Performance recording and as part of an ongoing specialist forage trial (results not available yet).

All silage for a new wintering system was able to be made pre Christmas. Some grass was transferred from the sheep and beef unit to do this.

Yearling steers were grazed amongst some hinds at fawning. They have since been finished on the deer unit and sold. So far, about 28% of the lambs have been finished. (All sheep/cattle going through the deer unit have grazing time recorded so returns to deer can be calculated.)

Swede crops established well; specialist clover/herb mixes sown as part of the forage trial had weed problems which have since been resolved.

Yearling stags finished to good weights. Killing space allocations restricted when these could go, but they are now getting through.

Southland Focus Farm

John and Jacky McLean farm at Lumsden. They have 417 ha, of which 392 ha is deer fenced, and run a mixture of English and Eastern Red hinds. The top hinds go to Red stags for replacements, with the balance going to Wapiti bulls. They aim to have a 120 kg hind rearing a good hybrid fawn and getting back in calf early. The aim is to finish most weaners by Christmas at 55 kg carcass weight.

Very good pasture quality over September-December saw R1 finishing stags gaining more than 300g/day. All R1 stags were killed by Christmas. Only cull for age hinds and cull R1 hinds remain.

Grass silage cuts were made in November and January; whole crop oat and grass has also been harvested. Silage yield is expected to top 1200 wet tonnes – enough for winter feed, a trading reserve and drought buffer.

Hinds and fawns were shifted onto a 16 ha rape/clover paddock on 30 January to try and improve fawn growth rates, which are being measured as part of the lactation trial (also in progress on the Otago focus farm).

Not all fawns are tagged yet, but so far the MA hinds' paddock percentage is very close to 100% (excluding scanned dries). One MA mob yielded 102 fawns from 102 hinds. Fawning for first calvers was down a bit – 60/72 (83.3%) in the worst mob.

Fawn weights 30 January (Red x Red):

First calvers, 1 mob:	38 kg ave
First calvers, 1 mob:	34 kg ave
MA hinds:	38-40 kg ave

Hybrid fawns have not been tagged or weighed yet.

Overall fawning will be down a bit on the 92-94% to the stag recorded in recent years, due to poorer R2 performance (conception and paddock %). However, overall the figure will be quite good. Growth rates are still behind targets and this will be the focus going forward.

For further information: Richard Copland, Focus Farm Project Facilitator, ph 03 470 0316.

Acknowledgement: Our thanks to Richard Copland for providing up-to-date information for both farms.

Coming events: 2006

25 February	National 2yo Velvet and Hard Antler Competition and Branch Challenge, Masterton. Anne Allen, 06 372 7706, or allens@wise.net.nz
5 April	Taihape Hybrid and Red weaner stag sale, Waiouru Complex
6 April	Taihape Hybrid and Red weaner hind sale, Waiouru Complex. Contact for both sales: Robert Auld 029 900 1335
20-22 April	Fourth World Deer Farming Congress, Melbourne, Australia. www.diaa.org/roodeer.html
23 May	NZDFA Branch Chairmen's meeting, Commodore Copthorne, Christchurch, followed by Annual Awards Dinner.
24 May	DINZ Formal General Meeting and NZDFA Annual General Meeting, Commodore Copthorne, Christchurch. Details and registration form in April <i>Deer Industry News</i> .
7-11 August	Sixth International Deer Biology Congress, Czech Republic, www.af.czu.cz/idbc

Equity share wanted in deer farming operation.

Preferably leasing land or able to be set up this way.

*Is this an opportunity to increase herd size?
All proposals and locations considered.*

**Phone 0274 535 838
or email tldnz@xtra.co.nz**

IVth World Deer Congress, Melbourne, Australia. 20th - 22nd April 2006

Start	Finish	Thursday 20th April: Promenade room
9:00	10:00	DELEGATES REGISTRATION
10:00	10:30	WELCOME
10:30	11:15	Association speakers from Aus & NZ
11:15	12:15	Association speakers from USA, Canada, South America
12:15	13:15	LUNCH
13:15	14:15	Association speakers from FEDFA, China & Indonesia
14:15	15:15	Domestication of deer in northern Mongolia: Professor Jerry C. Haigh, Western College of Vet Med., Saskatoon Canada
15:15	15:30	COFFEE BREAK
15:30	16:30	Radio Frequency & National Livestock Identification Schemes: Mr. Bruce Dumbrell, Director Leader Products

There will be two rooms running in parallel for Friday's sessions with each presentation repeated which will enable delegates to attend both presentations or skip one and visit the Latvian Poster Competition Topics include "Latvian Wild Animal Breeders Association" (author Dr. Dainis Paeglitis), or "Red deer breeding program in Latvia" (author deer farm "Saultari" Mara Paeglite). with entries from Latvia, Hungary and Australia.

		Friday 21st April	
Start	Finish	Room 1	Room 2
9:00	9:25	Dybowski Sika deer & Improving carcass composition for Cervus hybrids Dr. Jerzy Pietrzak. /Andy Cowan	Australian professional hunting Clark McGhie
9:30	9:55		
10:00	10:25	Sensory evaluation of Red and Fallow deer venison: Dr R Mulley / Christine Hutchison University Western Sydney/Dr Eva Wiklund University in Fairbanks	Safari International SL
10:25	10:45	COFFEE BREAK	
10:45	11:10	Sensory evaluation of Red and Fallow deer venison Dr R Mulley / Christine Hutchison, University Western Sydney & Dr Eva Wiklund University in Fairbanks	Safari International SL
11:15	11:40	USA Velvet trial update: Dr Jimmie Suttie General Manager Applied Biology Technology Ag Research NZ	Deer & landcare Dr Marion Johnson, Ag Research NZ
11:45	12:10		
12:10	13:15	LUNCH	
13:15	13:40	Deer farming in China Professor Wang Quankai, Jilin Agricultural University,	World venison marketing Innes Moffat General Manager venison marketing DINZ
13:45	14:10		
14:15	14:40	Genetics for venison & velvet Clive Jermy, Stanfield's Bushy Park	Trophy genetics and scoring systems Don Bennett, Deer Genetics NZ
14:45	15:10		
15:10	15:30	COFFEE BREAK	
15:30	15:55	Circum polar reindeer management Dr Greg Finstad & Dr Eva Wiklund University of Alaska Fairbanks	Embryos from weaners Dr Simon Walker, SA
16:00	16:25		
16:30	17:25	Elk for all reasons: Dr Mike Bringans, Canada , NZ etc etc	Deer nutrition: Dr. Gordon Dryden, University of Queensland,
19:00	23:59	DINNER AND AUCTION AT CROWN PALLADIUM	

		Saturday 22nd April: Promenade room	
9:00	10:00	International & Australian animal welfare: Dr Peter Thornber, Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry Australia Farm management schemes: Tony Pearce, Producer Manager DINZ	
10:00	10:45	Johnes & CWD: Professor Jerry C. Haigh & Jaimie Glossop, Massey University	
10:45	11:15	COFFEE BREAK	
11:15	12:15	Velvet stem cell research & wound healing updates: Dr Jimmie Suttie, General Manager Applied Biology Technology Ag Research NZ	
12:15	13:15	LUNCH	
13:15	13:45	WRAP	CONV
13:45	14:15	Presentation for the Vth World Deer Congress	Professor Wang Quankai
CLOSING: JIM MOIR, DIAA PRESIDENT			



Memo: 26.12.05
From: S. Claus
To: 'Dancer'

The holiday season is over and it's time to start thinking about the **IVth World Deer Congress** in Australia. I see they have some of the world's leading deer studs sharing their secrets on herd improvement through genetics and embryo transplants, so take plenty of notes. Also I need you to come back with all the latest info on the venison and velvet markets but keep a low profile during the hunting seminars.

I know what you are like when there is free food and drinks, so don't over imbibe at the Friday night dinner as I would like to hear a bit about what is going on in Mongolia and this Circum Polar Reindeer thing.

Well that's about it. Fill in that registration form and send it right away because if you miss it, I still have more wall space!

IVth World Deer Congress
Melbourne, Australia, 20-22 April 2006

This will be your best \$ return from deer this year so

BOOK NOW!!!!!!

www.diaa.org/roodeer.html



Remarkables Park sale: met expectations in a buyer's market.

Sire sale report

Vendors were bracing themselves for a difficult sale season and in a number of cases the results bore this out, with disappointing bidding despite a good quality lineup. Nonetheless a few breeders bucked the trend and were genuinely pleased with their results.

In many sales, although average prices were well down, clearance rates were very good. A common thread throughout most sales was the premium attached to good trophy genetics.

Top price for the season reported to *Deer Industry News* was recorded at Stanfield's Bushey Park – \$51,000 for a Woburn son of Herbrand. Foveran, Black Forest Pelorus and Remarkables Park were among others in the South Island to report solid sales given the conditions, and in the North

Island Tower Farms had a good result for both stags and hinds, with the gross and average well up on last year. For many others, sales were patchy.

As in previous years, *Deer Industry News* invited all known studs and significant breeders having sales to submit a report. Our thanks again to those who responded. If you didn't hear from us, please contact *DIN* with your up-to-date details so we can ensure you don't miss out next time. The following is a summary of the reports we received by press time.

Arawata Partnership	Pine Bush, 9 January
2 yo sire stags:	\$2,000 – \$7,000
3 yo sire stags:	\$2,000 – \$5,400
13 month hinds	\$300 – \$900
Comment:	Large crowd in attendance. Considering Arawata had possibly the heaviest head of 2 yo velvet at 5.95 kg SA2 for sale in the country, the bidding was disappointing and showed the lack of confidence in the deer industry. This was felt by all the sales in the South. With 2 yo stags averaging 192 kg liveweight (without antler) and average 2 yo velvet weight of 3.7 kg, it was an exceptional liveweight. A number of very good stags were passed due to a lack of buyers. Most of the stags purchased went north to Otago, Canterbury or the North Island. Thirteen month hinds had a reasonable market.

Black Forest	Outram, 11 January
Stags sold:	43 out of 45 on offer.
Top price:	\$15,000
Average:	\$4,668
Sales compared with last year:	More stags sold this year; average only slightly down on last year.
Comment:	Very good gallery and strong bidding, with stags sold into all regions of New Zealand. Buyers were looking for top breed values, good weights and strong attractive heads. Trophy genetics in strong demand. We were very pleased with sales considering the very difficult situation facing deer farmers at present, and very much appreciate the continuing support from our loyal customers.

New Zealand Warnham & Woburn Society

Photographic Awards 2006

OPEN and HUMOROUS Categories

ENTRY FORM IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF *DEER INDUSTRY NEWS* • ENTRIES CLOSE 1 MAY 2006





Gloriavale sale – lack of buyers with money to spend this year.

Doncaster Deer Partnership	Waipahi, 6 January
Stags sold:	21 out of 27 on offer.
Top price:	\$4,000
Average:	\$1,600
Sales compared with last year:	Very similar.
Comment:	Total clearance last year for same average. A lot of buyers still not paying enough attention to the industry recognised across herd EBVs. Noticeably less buying power in the market.
Foveran Deer Park	Haka Valley, Kurow, 13 January.
Stags sold:	71 out of 79 on offer.
Top price:	\$15,000
Sales compared with last year:	Very good.
Comment:	A new record for 2 yo hard horn cut after sale from a Mountbatten son, cutting 11.84 kg from Lot 6 by Alf Kinzett for \$13,500. Four other stags beat the previous record, also cutting over 9.69 kg HH – three of which exceeded 10 kg HH. Twenty-five 2 yo stags weighed over 200 kg on sale day. Stags were presented in excellent order, both for bodyweight and antler, as confirmed by these results. There was strong demand at the sale, and we were very happy with the result.
Gloriavale	Insignis Park, 17 January
Stags sold:	22 out of 28 on offer.
Top price:	\$5,500
Average:	\$2,345
Yearling hinds – top:	\$3,000
Yearling hinds – average:	\$780
Sales compared with last year:	A little behind last year, but very similar.
Comment:	Sale was held in conjunction with Mike Dempsey, who had 5 stags on offer. He sold four stags, for a top price of \$8,000. There was a lot of interest in our stags, but people just didn't have the money to spend this year. Gloriavale also had 11 yearling hinds on offer, which sold well. Top price for a pure Woburn hind was \$3,000.
Ingor Deer Farm	Waimatua, 9 January.
Stags sold:	36 out of 40 on offer.
Top price:	\$1,300
Average:	\$910
Yearling hinds:	\$425 – \$225
Two-year velvet stags:	\$280
Sales compared with last year:	Stags down 30%; yearling hinds down 10%; 2 year velvet stags down 10%.
Comment:	Most stags and hinds went throughout Otago and Southland.

Mayfield Elk-Wapiti	Winton, 8 January.
Stags sold:	3 out of 13 on offer.
Top price:	\$10,500
Average:	\$7,366
Sales compared with last year:	A great average price, too many potential trophy elk bulls to do discounting just to make a sale. 20 semen straws sold for \$8,100 (Silverado and 4 Play).
Comment:	The top price bull went to Mike Steiner (North Island) – the three-year national velvet winner sired by Silverado. The other two bulls went to Donald and Leigh Whyte of Ashburton. One of the Elk bulls weighed in at 380 kg at three years, with coronets like dinner plates, sired by Silverado and Kiwi Renegade. It would have been nice to have more bulls sold, but the market for most of these chappies would be for people to be keeping all their weaners for future breeding. Like all deer breeders who have an auction on farm, it's a good excuse to get the helpers in to clear the yards up and to have that Christmas and New Year's knees up.
Netherdale Deer Stud	Balfour, 10 January.
Elite stags sold:	14 out of 19 elite Netherdale three year old sires, 2 out of 4 elite Cranbrook sire stags.
Elite stags top price:	\$8,000 (elite Netherdale three year old)
Elite stags average:	\$3,000 (elite Netherdale sire stags), \$2,050 (elite Cranbrook sires).
Commercial animals sold:	3 out of 10 Netherdale commercial stags, 36 out of 40 thirteen-mth hinds, 51 out of 60 Netherdale two year old velvet stags.
Commercial animals top prices:	\$750 (13 mth hind), \$460 per head (pen of two year old velvet stags).
Commercial animals averages:	\$1,150 (commercial stags), \$344 (13 mth hinds), \$400 (two year old velvet stags).
Comment:	There was good demand for the 13 mth hinds and two year old velvet stags, with prices similar to last season. The demand for the sire stags was disappointing with prices back on last season by 33%, although there has been a steady demand since the sale day. We were the only stud to present all sire stags at auction with their velvet removed. This may have worked against us, as the demand was for stags with their heads grown out. Some animals with very ordinary heads sold for good money.
Pampas Heights Stud Deer	Rotorua, 6 January.
Stags sold:	14 out of 25 on offer.
Top price:	\$32,000
Average:	\$4,208
Sales compared with last year:	Half of last year's gross take on the day.
Comment:	A disappointing and confusing sale day. Ten of the top twelve lots were turned in, and then buyers purchased the tail end of the sale offering. All female stock (15) were sold. This year's two year old sires were the latest in antler development ever offered from Pampas Heights and trophy potential was not able to be gauged. Most buyers, it seemed, were trophy motivated. The good news is that next year's three year olds will be a class above anything seen previously.
Peel Forest Estate	Geraldine, 14 January.
Stags sold:	36 out of 38 on offer.
Top price:	\$13,200
Average:	\$4,428
Sales compared with last year:	Increase.
Comment:	In view of the large quantity of stags sold in the week prior to our sale, we had a large audience and good list of keen registered buyers. Buyers were impressed with the heavy good conformation stags with large correct antlers. Our commitment to the DeerSelect programme was of benefit to buyers. Temperament was excellent. Some very good bargains were purchased. Buyers were very pleased with their purchases, following good results from previous purchases from us.

Pelorus Deer Stud	Ashburton, 14 January.
Stags sold:	19 out of 22 on offer.
Top price:	\$22,200
Average:	\$5,900
Yearling hinds average:	\$1,950
Sales compared with last year:	Increase on last year's average (\$5,428)
Comment:	All went well considering the markets. Stags went all over New Zealand. Top-priced stag (\$22,000) a 3 yo by Lewis out of a Clive daughter (25 points) went to Foveran. Cut 15.74 kg hard horn post sale. Second-highest (\$16,500) to Gary Fowler (North Island) – also by Lewis out of a Clive daughter (23 points). Third-highest stag, a 2 yo by Lewis out of a Clive daughter, 25+ points, sold to Alf Kinzett, Murchison. Also sold 11 yearling hinds.
Remarkables Park Stud	Queenstown, 10 January.
Stags sold:	65 out of 65 on offer.
Top price:	\$6,300
Average:	\$2,234
Comment:	The biggest two year olds up to 250 & 260 kg. More than 80% over 200 kg. Deer presented well muscled and lean. Deer not wintered inside any longer. (While yearling weights from inside and outside wintering are no different by their 12 month yearling weight – although in the past it was easier in cold Otago winters to feed inside – because this was clearly perceived as a negative by the market this practice has been discontinued.) Stud's track record for meeting the market upheld in 2006 with 60 of the 65 lots selling at auction, including all the top price deer. Remaining five sold immediately after. Growth BVs are also becoming more important. With ongoing recording, the reliability of the BVs will become increasingly assured, and we believe this will attract further buyer support for BVs. Trophy potential buyers are interested in the size of antlers and sire genetics, irrespective of growth BVs. Genetics of sires like Adonis and Brusnik were a major contributing factor to success, with some two-year-old full velvet heads weighing over 8kg. Most stags went to the South Island, but a good number went to the North, principally to Hawke's Bay – Manawatu. The sale met the stud's expectations. Prices in buyers' favour but getting more of the stud's deer out to commercial farms will bring repeat buyers.
Rockvale Deer Stud	New Plymouth, Taranaki, 9 January.
Stags sold:	17 out of 21 on offer.
Top price:	\$6,750
Average:	\$2,200
Yearling hinds top:	\$3,500
Yearling hinds average:	\$1,406
Sales compared with last year:	No sale last year
Comment:	Also sold 8 yearling hinds with a chance to go to service to our two-year stag with about 37-40 pts. He had 42 pts and a SCI of 321 as a spiker. The sale was about what we expected with the stags going to Wanganui, Waikanae, Taupo, and Hawke's Bay.
Rodway Park and Sarnia Park	Rotorua, 5 January
Stags:	13 of 31 on offer sold.
Top price:	\$14,000
Average:	\$4,380
Hinds:	21 of 29 on offer sold.
Top price:	\$2,300
Average:	\$900
Sales compared with last year:	Improved
Comment:	New bloodlines being released to the market sold strongly – Banks, Achilles. Very strong market for quality yearling hinds. Against the trend, our average increased this year.

Stanfield's Bushey Park Ltd	Palmerston, 12 January.
Stags sold:	55 out of 59 on offer.
Top price:	\$51,000
Average:	\$4,421
Comment:	Three highest prices in country, \$51,000 for Woburn son of Herbrand to Craig Wilson, Harry Robinson, and Partners. \$40,000 for Eastern son of Maximilian to Ross Green at Whenuapai and \$35,000 for Lot 1 Warnham to Argentine Concerns. Heaviest stags in the country with Maximilian sons up to 262 kg. Liveweight Lot 1 to Mike Wilkins and Warnhams up to 221 kg liveweight.
Tikana Wapiti	Winton, 7 January
Stags sold:	17 out of 19 on offer.
Top price:	\$18,000
Average:	\$3,250
Sales compared to last year:	Up slightly on last year's average of \$3,100.
Comment:	Good sale in face of market conditions. 90% clearance on the day with enquiry and sales since. Sale average helped by sale of "Frodo", an exceptional four year old Wapiti bull cutting over 12kg of EW Supreme. He was purchased by John Falconer of Clachanburn Station for \$18,000. A pen of yearling Wapiti cows sold for \$900 each.
Tower Farms	Cambridge, 7 January
Stags sold (2 yo plus one spiker):	47 out of 51 on offer.
Top priced stag:	\$14,000 (purchaser Carol Waghorn)
Average (stags):	\$5,371
Hinds sold (2 yo and 1 yo):	19 out of 19 on offer.
Top priced hind:	\$4,200 (purchased by John and Zoe Hunter)
Average (hinds):	\$1,423
Sales compared to last year:	Gross and average up significantly on last year
Comment:	Full gallery of high-spirited and enthusiastic buyers. Gratifying to receive a good average price in today's selling climate. Better still was the atmosphere created by the gallery of people investing in a product that they could once again make money from. Heaviest OG head cut post sale at 9.16 kg (Lot 4) purchased by Brian and Jackie Wellington (\$10,500). One spiker sold for \$6,000 to Hans Ruiterman. Demand strong for safari genetics and velvet-safari combinations. Stock went as far north as Kaikohe and as far south as Timaru.
Unfehlbar	N/A
Stags sold:	None of 10 on offer
Comment:	Sale cancelled due to withdrawal of partner (Willow Creek). Unfehlbar pure English two and three year old stags available for sale by private treaty. Contact Guy Brady or Lynette Terry-Brady (03) 347-8158 or (021) 664-805
Windermere Deer	Hamilton, 5 January.
Stags sold:	18 out of 24 on offer.
Top price:	\$20,000
Average:	\$4,518
Sales compared with last year:	Last year 20 sold out of 26, average price \$5,845
Comment:	Our sale was the first after New Year. There was a huge attendance, but bidding was generally slow as bidders tried to gauge the market. There was a definite flow of interest to stags with trophy appeal. It was undoubtedly one of our best ever line-ups of stags. Our average was just a little down on last year, which was amazing considering the dire industry circumstances.

Southland movement control areas reduced

In a move it says indicates major progress against bovine Tb in the region, the Animal Health Board is making large reductions in Tb Movement Control Areas in Southland.


From 1 March, AHB will revoke the entire Western Southland Movement Control Area around the Takitimu Hills. The northwest corner of the Hokonui Movement Control Area will also be rolled back in the Caroline to Dipton area, from North of the Glenure Hill Road to Ben Callum Road and down Winton Stream to Mitchell Road.

Southland Regional Animal Health Committee Chairman Mike O'Brien says the changes are good news for farmers and a real sign of the benefits of the Tb control programme.

More than 300 farmers in these areas will no longer be required to carry out pre-movement Tb tests on cattle or deer from herds with a Clear Tb status before sending animals off the farm. Routine Tb testing will be retained on an annual basis. Special testing requirements will still apply to infected herds and some suspended status herds.

"Pre-movement Tb testing is a major management hassle," Mike O'Brien said. "It means all your stock movement has to be planned well ahead, it reduces your management flexibility and adds costs for extra stock handling. For deer farmers, there is also the direct cost of paying for the test itself."

O'Brien, who farms cattle at Monowai, says the many thousands of cattle and deer that have been pre-movement tested out of the Tb Movement Control Areas represent a huge commitment that farmers have made to the Tb control programme.

Currently Southland has a record low of just 5 herds infected with bovine Tb, down from a peak of 56 ten years ago. 



Reduced movement control areas in Southland.

Obituary: Mervyn Amos

Mervyn Amos, one of the true pioneers of the deer industry, passed away recently while playing his beloved golf at Tauranga.

Along with his brother Gerald, Mervyn developed a large tract of bush into what was to become one of the most attractive deer parks one could ever see: "Tawa Deer Park", named for the trees that grew there.

They attained one of five permits allowed by the then Government to farm deer. Mervyn also hosted the first field day to be organised under NZDFA rules, and what a day that was! I can still see the North Island councillors up on stage – Mervyn along with Eddie Dixon, the late Allan Ford and others, while we sat hanging on every word.

The farm was sold in 1980 and the brothers went their separate ways. Mervyn and his wife Evonne purchased a farm at Tauranga and continued an interest in deer.

When I sat next to him at a sale of Peter Fraser's not too long ago, he remarked how times had changed, saying "It used to take me four stags to get me as many points as that one there!"

Mervyn may not have been as high profile as some, but his enthusiasm never waned. So along with all those people who knew Mervyn in the early days, could we offer Evonne, Grant, Michelle, his grand-daughter and brothers Gerald and Barry our deepest sympathy.

Murray Matuschka

National Velvet and Trophy Antler Competition Results: Corrections

Competition organisers have notified some minor corrections to the results published in the competition booklet that was distributed to deer farmers with the December issue of *Deer Industry News*.

Three year-old Red Section: Entry by Donald and Leigh Whyte, Ashburton: YR556

Correct weight: 5.56kg, 22.47 points, placing 3rd = (up from 6th as reported in results booklet).

Three year-old Elk/Wapiti Section: Entry by Colin Smith, Winton: Blue 255

Correct weight: 7.04kg, 40.18 points. Placing of 4th is unchanged.

Note on scoring for Elk/Wapiti Hard antler

Competition organiser Peter Allan points out that the scoring for this category takes into account a width factor (a.k.a. spread or span). He says the Red Hard Antler category does not include a scoring measure for width.

As an aside, he also notes that it is not possible to claim an SCI world record for a live animal. To qualify, the animal must be shot.

Letters to the Editor

Clive Jermy responds

Dear Editor

It came as a surprise to see the aggressive reaction from the Wapiti Society, Grant Muir and Murray Cook, to my article in the October 2005 issue of *Deer Industry News* on the economics of AI for venison. My article did not mention or allude to Wapiti in any way. As a key role of Wapiti and Wapiti hybrids is breeding terminal sires, I am amazed at the objections.

Murray Cook's personal attack on myself and the editor does not warrant any comment at all. However there are a couple of points raised by Grant Muir which need some response.

Firstly, the simple fact is that if you are lucky enough to average as high as a 75% conception rate for AI and are paying as low as \$90 per straw, then the cost per AI calf will be about \$179 per improved calf. Producers will judge for themselves the viability of this cost, plus 25 – 50% later born calves, the cost of a backup stag and, if we follow Grant Muir's advice and use any old velvet for the job, then we certainly have written off the backup calves. I would have thought this was a role for the

terminal sire! Nevertheless, the penalty of the later born calves cannot be ignored.

I used the examples of purchasing good and very good (top 5%) sires at \$8,000 and \$15,000, only to show that at a cost per calf of \$40 or \$74.50 respectively, one can see the obvious benefits.

As well as having the sire as an asset, one avoids the labour cost, the later-born calves and the cost of a backup sire – and has an asset to sell to help fund a replacement.

Grant Muir's figures on write downs of a stag don't make any sense at all and seem to be a distortion.

Regardless, if we adopted the Peter Gatley view of not keeping a sire for five years, the cost benefits still outweigh AI, even if one writes a stag down over three years:

- \$8,000 sire owned for three years – \$66 per calf against \$179 for AI
- \$15,000 sire owned for three years – \$124 per calf against \$179 for AI.

Peter Gatley tries to criticise retaining a stag for five years as being too long, risking inbreeding and narrowing the genetic base. Well Peter, most of us own one sire per 50 hinds, providing plenty of genetic diversity and our farmers are very intelligent people

who understand full well the issues with close breeding.

If one can find better, more improved sires of higher venison BVs than ones existing sires, then sure, change earlier.

I presume that if Peter does not advocate keeping a sire for five years then Carl and Collussus, DIL's top two sires (both 100% Stanfield breeding), must be nearly ready for sausages!

Yours sincerely
Clive Jermy

Is it any wonder?

Dear Sir

Is it any wonder that farmers don't contribute their views? They are too busy trying to survive this sick industry where all they get is little direction and platitudes that 'it'll come right'.

It all sounds distressingly like the former Wool Board and looks like them as well on the shiny, expensive paper propaganda. How can this be justified when venison hit a low of \$3.38/kg and velvet \$23/kg?

Yours faithfully
Brian P. Foley, Waimate



Brian with the Matuschka Award, won in 2003.

Obituary: Brian Managh

The deer industry has lost another of its pioneers and true innovators with the recent passing of Brian Managh (62).

Brian and Anne Managh began farming deer in the Bay of Plenty in 1977, starting with a few animals purchased from the South Island and animals captured locally or bought 'straight from the helicopter'.

They soon gained a reputation both for innovation and their willingness to help others coming into the fledgling industry. Brian and Anne were nominated on several occasions for the Matuschka Award, which they received in 2003 – well-deserved recognition for many years' quiet but effective service to the industry at grassroots level.

They first attended an NZDFA conference in 1978, and Brian was instrumental in setting up the Rotorua Branch in 1981. Both spent many years on the committee, with Anne serving several years as secretary (before a term on the NZDFA Council in the 1980s) and Brian as Branch Chairman.

Brian was an instigator of the Taupo/BOP Deer Group, a forum for exchanging ideas and promoting productivity improvement. He also helped develop the Deer QA scheme and was an inaugural farm assessor. Later he was the first Branch Chairman to support the Rotorua initiative that led eventually to the successful Deer Farmers' Landcare Manual.

Brian will be remembered in the deer industry as innovative, a leader by example, totally unpretentious and a thoroughly decent bloke. The industry extends its sympathy to Anne and their children Angela, Sonia and Teresa.

Obituary: Rex Giles 1929-2006

NZ Deer farming licence No 1, Rahana Station Taupo (13 March 1970), Game packing House No 1, Chairman Consolidated Traders Group of Companies.

Our archives record the extraordinary vision, regardless of problems, that motivated Rex Giles and Consolidated Traders to pave the way for the foundation of the industry in the 1960s and 70s. He worked with influential leaders including Holyoake, Talboys, McIntyre, Riddiford and Ian Watt, director of MAF's Meat Division, to develop regulations allowing deer farming and game packing and export.

Control and productive management of wild game was a lifelong ambition. Rex's farming steps began at Waikanae in the 1950s when he started obtaining deer. He recorded then "The best method to control and manage deer herds is by careful planning and managing of feed patterns."

When regulations were changed to deer allow farming from 29 June 1967, colleagues recognised Rex's role, describing him as "positive, determined with indefatigable efforts and foresight and initiative". That innovation was recognised with his support of the first Deer farming at Lincoln with Professor Coop and then at Invermay, with practical experimental developments at Rahana Station with Red and Fallow deer and the founding of the NZDFA in 1975.

The industry acknowledges Rex for this determination and motivation. As a pioneer there is no greater recognition than the No 1 Licence. We thank him for that and extend our deepest sympathy to Rex's wife Moi Chua, children Marie, Robin, Philippa, Simon, Timothy, Libby, Sarah and Hannah, and extended family.

Rex died peacefully at Mary Potter Hospice, Wellington on 10 February 2006.

www.tributes.com